MYSTERY MAGAZINE

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A DETECTIVE STORY

UNDER A MASK

BY · CRITTENDEN · MARRIOTT ·

READ "CASE 4,444," A GREAT DETECTIVE STORY, IN OUR NEXT

MYSTERY MAGAZINE

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Under a Mask

AN INTERESTING DETECTIVE STORY

By CRITTENDEN MARRIOTT, author of "The Silken Sheath," "Sally Castleton, Southerner," etc.

CHAPTER ONE

JOHN SCOTT was a writer of histories, and he longed to be a writer of romances. More, though to all appearance a quiet matter-of-fact young-old fellow, he longed to be a hero of the romances he wanted to write. He longed also to be the "lead" of other men's romances; his library was filled with tales of adventure, in each of which he had fought and loved and triumphed with the hero; he fairly worshiped his daring cousin Leroy Scott, who lived with him and who seemed to meet an adventure every time he went out of the house; and he hoped with untiring ardor that the day might come when he should "kiss his woman and strike his man." But he made no effort to start a chain of circumstances that might lead to the consummation of his desires. He simply sat and waited for Adventure to come and knock at his door.

And Adventure, being a coy jade who usually insists on being wooed, tossed her head and consorted with more demonstrative admirers.

However, as the present proved, she was merely coy not shy. There came a time when John took a step toward her. It was a very short step; most people would have thought it no step at all. But it was very daring for John, and it sufficed to start him on a mad career—one that lasted only a few hours, it is true, but that left him committed irrevocably. Few heroes of romance suffered as he did while he waited for the telephone-ring that would decide his fate; and when it came——

Of course, it was a girl that caused him to take the

step that led to his involvement. It always is a girl who opens the door to the right sort of adventure. Without a girl, adventure may be exciting, but it is usually sordid, and it always lacks sparkle. With a girl——

The queer part of it is that the girl need not be adventurous herself. She may shrink from adventure; most women do; most women prefer the little things of life, the little attentions, the little remembrances; very few want their knights to prove their devotion by returning their glove from a lion's den.

It is not what the girl wants, but what the man thinks she wants, that leads to adventure. But probably till the end of time men will go forth to collect dragons' scalps for their lady's sake, when she would much rather they would remember to bring her a box of candy for her birthday.

Helen Merton was distinctly not adventurous. The very thought of adventure would have appalled her. She was very conservative and essentially domestic, as indeed she had every right to be, being the daughter of a delightfully domestic mother and a conservative, if peppery, father—a banker who stood high in the community for soundness and common sense. Nevertheless she had spirit and vivacity, and when it came to choosing between John Scott and his cousin Leroy she could not help comparing the two.

Physically they were very much alike, these cousins; their features, except that John wore a mustache and Leroy wore none, were practically replicas. Their habits, however, were very different and gave them such totally different expressions and such totally different manners that few people thought them alike at all. John was quiet, studious, hard-working and stooped slightly—just enough to rob him of an inch of statue. Leroy was gay and dashing and boisterous, and carried himself so as to seem an inch taller than he really was. Moreover, John deferred to Leroy constantly, even in Helen's presence, and continually showed his admiration for his splendid cousin. That this deference and admiration were genuine was patent from the fact that John was wealthy and Leroy was not. Leroy, in fact, lived in John's house and was popularly credited with obtaining from John the money that he squandered so lavishly.

On the afternoon of the day on which Adventure was to begin to spin her web about John's unwary feet, Mrs. Merton was at home to any acquaintances who cared to call. Her big parlors contained a fair sprinkling of women who came and went, dropping in for a few minutes and then passing on to drop in on some one else. John Scott was the only masculine guest present, and he kept a quiet place in the background, chatting with any one who was washed up by the social waves in his vicinity, and waiting patiently for the brief intervals between the departure of one set of guests and the arrival of another set that gave him a chance to approach Helen.

For a time these intervals were brief and far between. John, however, was not discouraged. He knew that they would increase both in number and in duration as the hour grew later; and he waited patiently, being fairly certain that this time would come at last.

Finally it did come, or rather it appeared to come. The latest bevy of girls and women bowed themselves out with chatter and laughter, and silence—like a poultice—descended. Mrs. Merton turned with a sigh from bidding the last good-by. She glanced at her daughter and at John and smiled faintly.

"Well," she said, "I guess that's all for to-day; anyway, I'm going up-stairs. You can send for me if you need me, Helen. You'll excuse me, Mr. Scott?"

John acquiesced without the slightest demur. He knew that in his place Leroy would have protested and would have almost, if not quite, managed to convince Mrs. Merton that it was she whom he had longed to see, and that her departure quenched the light of day for him. With all his heart John wished that he could say such things; but he knew that to say them was wholly beyond him, despite the fact that he was fonder of Mrs. Merton—much fonder—than Leroy could possibly be. So he only bowed and smiled as the lady went out.

Then Helen called him. "Come over here and sit down, Mr. Scott," she ordered. "It was awfully good of you to wait and give me a chance to talk to you. How is that wonderful new book of yours coming on? I'm sure I wish you'd let me read some of it. But I suppose it is way over my head."

John shook his head smilingly. He always felt at his ease with Helen, which was more than he did with any other woman.

"I'll be delighted to have you read it some day," he said. "You won't find it over your head; but you may find it silly. I'm tired of writing history. I flung my last manuscript into a drawer to-day and started a dime novel. I've always wanted to write one and I'm going to do it now. Of course, I shall never publish it."

"A dime novel!" Helen cried out breathlessly. "You don't mean it? Oh, I'm so glad! History, as you write it, is thrilling; but then history is so tied down to facts——"

"Several critics have said that my histories don't err in that direction," interrupted John. "In fact, some of them have said that my histories are largely fiction."

"They are almost as good as fiction," amended Miss Merton. "That's what I like about them. They seem to make things turn out right, which of course everybody knows that history never does. Now, in fiction, and especially in a dime novel, you can—er—cut the string and let her soar."

"Maybe the critics, if they ever get a chance, will say that my fiction reads like history," laughed John. "That's what they said of Froude, you know—that his histories were fiction and his fiction history, the one unreliable and the other dull."

"Nonsense!" Helen moved a little closer. "Do tell me all about your plot," she coaxed. "I know it's perfectly splendid! What's the heroine like? Oh, make me the heroine, won't you? I'd just love to be a heroine of fiction, and make yourself the hero. Please!"

"Me? Oh, I can't. I couldn't help making you the heroine; but I—I—— Oh, I couldn't make myself the hero. It—it would be presumptuous."

"No; it wouldn't. It would be just fine! Men must be presumptuous sometimes, anyway, and you——"

The portières that masked the parlor door clashed on their rings as the maid in the hall drew them aside; and a man pushed in between them, a big bluff, hearty man, who came forward boisterously.

"How do you do, Miss Merton?" he chortled. "Am I in time to get some tea? I'm crazy about tea, you know—

not." Then he turned to John. "Hello, John!" he boomed; didn't know you were here."

As cheerfully as he could, John got up. "Hello, Leroy," he said; "I'm just going."

He was going, too, though a moment before he had had no intention of doing so. He knew better than to try to compete with Leroy, who was always and everywhere the center of any company in which he happened to be. Usually John was only too willing to fall into the background and listen to his brilliant cousin; but this time he felt that he could not do it. He had long feared that Leroy was becoming fond of Helen, and now conviction rushed upon him, and against Leroy he knew he had no chance. Feeling so, he felt that he could not stay to let his lack of conversation be contrasted with Leroy's jollity.

So he turned to Helen. "Good-night, Miss Merton," he said.

But Helen frowned. "Oh, you're not going?" she protested. "Why, I thought you were going to tell me about" —she glanced at Leroy—"about our litle secret. Please don't go."

But John insisted. "I'm afraid I must," he answered regretfully.

Leroy laughed. "Good-night, John," he said; "don't let us detain you."

Helen started forward angrily. "But I want to detain you, Mr. Scott!" she cried. "I've got a lot more to say to you. Please don't go."

John looked unhappy. "I'm afraid I must," he repeated. "I—I've got to get to work on that new book of mine."

"Oh," Helen nodded; "well, if you must," she acceded. "Remember what I told you, and be sure to let me see it as soon as you can."

John nodded and backed toward the door. "I will," he promised; "good-night." He backed through the portières and was gone.

In the street he set his face homeward; but he moved slowly and unhappily. Why, oh, why, he asked himself, why couldn't he be like Leroy? Everybody liked Leroy. All the girls liked him; Helen liked him; he himself liked him.

"Oh, I'm a poor, tongue-tied fool," he pondered bitterly. "I don't even dare tell Helen that I love her. I don't even dare put my fate at the test; but it wouldn't be any use, anyway. She'd never look at me when Leroy was near. He's the better man. He is far and away the better man. He ought to win her. I'm only a dub."

Arrival at his own door interrupted the current of his lamentations. He mounted the steps and went in. Then, remembering his promise to Helen, he went into the library and took out his newly begun manuscript and glanced over its pages. Then, with a sudden impulse, he tore it across and flung it into the wastebasket, took out a new pad of paper and sat down and began to write.

CHAPTER TWO

WHEN John went out of the Merton parlor, Helen turned on Leroy hotly. "I'll thank you not to dismiss my guests, Mr. Scott," she exclaimed. "It is an impertinence, and you've hurt your cousin."

Leroy roared. "Hurt John?" he echoed. "Not I. I wouldn't hurt old John for the world. He's an awfully good fellow; but he sure is slow. Anyhow"—Leroy's voice fell—"anyhow I just had to see you alone. You know why."

Helen's eyes fell. She thought she did know why, and she was not ready to meet the issue. Hesitantly she glanced toward the door through which John had disappeared.

"Well, couldn't you have waited for an opportunity?" she asked weakly.

"You know I couldn't." Leroy's answer was instant. "I couldn't wait another moment. I've waited too long already. For days I've been trying to tell you; but somehow I couldn't do it. I don't know why I couldn't. I'm not usually timid. It's only with you that—— But that's over now. I've got to tell you. You're mine Helen, you're mine! I love you. I can't live without you. I've got to have you."

The man's voice was quivering; his outstretched hands were shaking. Suddenly he plunged forward and caught the girl in his arms.

Breathless, amazed, she looked up. She was furiously angry, but her nerves were trembling, and while she hated him for his presumption, she did not try to free herself.

"No, no!" she gasped.

"But I say 'Yes, yes!'" cried Leroy. "Yes, yes! Forever yes! Give me your lips, Helen. Give me——" Undeterred, he bent and kissed her hotly, savagely.

"Well, upon my word!" The words fell coldly and unexpectedly. Unseen by the two, the portières had again opened, and Helen's father stepped in and had paused on the threshold. "Helen, what does this mean?" he demanded.

Leroy spun around; but he made no motion to release the girl. Rather his grasp upon her tightened, checking her tentative effort to free herself.

"Ah, Mr. Merton," he exclaimed, "I'm glad you've come. Your daughter has just promised to become my wife, and we want to ask your consent."

Helen's spring of amazement was so strong and so genuine that it would have freed her had not Leroy been prepared for it. "I never——" she gasped.

But Mr. Merton gave her no time to finish.

"I refuse my consent," he said sharply. "Helen, come here."

Helen did not move, though Leroy made the action possible by promptly releasing her. Helen had a good deal of her father in her, and she objected to being ordered in that tone of voice. Instinctively she demurred.

"But why, father?" she demanded.

The veins in Mr. Merton's forehead began to swell. His temper was short at best.

"Because I say so," he answered shortly. "Is there anything else you wish to ask me before you go, Mr. Scott?"

Leroy laughed, apparently with amusement.

"Of course there is," he answered. "Good heavens, Mr. Merton, you can't refuse me as a son-in-law in such a manner as this, without giving me some explanation. You would almost seem to have some personal objection to me."

"I have, sir. I have every objection. I object to your

associates; I object to your manner of life; I object to your reputation; I object to you utterly, wholly and completely. Is that sufficient, sir?"

Before Leroy could speak, Helen stepped forward. She always took the part of the under dog.

"Father, you forget yourself," she exclaimed. "Mr. Scott has done me the honor to ask me to marry him, and he is entitled to a fair answer. Besides, he is under your own roof."

"I've given him an answer," rasped Mr. Merton. "If he wants chapter and verse let him come to my office to-morrow and I'll give it to him. At present I have nothing more to say. Good-afternoon, Mr. Scott."

Leroy drew himself up in stately fashion.

"Since you take this attitude—I may call it this amazing attitude, Mr. Merton," he said, "I have nothing more to say at present. Your tones seem to suggest that you consider me guilty of some fault that affects my honor. I shall call at your office to-morrow and ask you to make good, sir." With a low, formal bow Leroy turned away.

But Helen stopped him.

"Wait a moment, Mr. Scott," she ordered. "I think we ought to get at the bottom of this thing now. Father has said too much not to say more." She turned to Mr. Merton. "Father," she said, "you owe Mr. Scott an immediate explanation."

But Merton refused to speak further.

"I'll give it to him to-morrow," he rasped; "not before. To-night I will say nothing more. Mr. Scott, you have asked my consent to marry my daughter, and I have refused it. I bid you good-night, sir." Mr. Merton swept aside the portières of the door and stood waiting.

Calmly Leroy turned to Helen.

"I shall never give you up, Helen," he said. "To-morrow I shall find out what all this is about, and I shall come back to claim you. Till then, good-night, dear." Deliberately ignoring the alderman, he stooped and kissed her on the lips.

Helen received the kiss stonily. But as Leroy went out, she turned to her father with flashing eyes.

"Father, I am ashamed of you," she flared.

But the last shred of Merton's patience had been exhausted.

"Go to your room, miss!" he roared. "Go to your room! Leroy Scott is disreputable, positively disreputable; his reputation is vile; his attention is an insult to any decent woman. Never speak to him again; never again—you understand?"

Helen stared.

"I know Mr. Scott has been wild, father," she said. "He has told me all that from time to time; but he has done nothing dishonorable, and he wants to turn over a new leaf. It isn't like you to——"

"A new leaf—he?" Laughing harshly, Mr. Merton turned his back on his daughter and strode from the room.

Leroy meanwhile was on his way home. Apparently he was not greatly disturbed by Mr. Merton's actions, for he whistled gaily as he went. As he entered the Scott house he glanced into the library; but seeing that John was writing away like mad, he went on up the stairs without speaking.

"Hello, Jarvis," he said to the sleek valet who appeared at the door of the inner room as he entered the outer one. "What's the news?"

"This, sir."

The man held out a note that could have come only from a woman.

Leroy tore it open.

"Humph! Humph!" he muttered, as he read it. "Darned little fool. She's got nerve, after what happened last night! But I suppose I've got to see her; but this is the last time, Jarvis, you understand? The very last time!"

"Yes, sir; quite so, sir. What will you wear to-night, sir?"

"Humph!" Leroy was still frowning over the note. "The usual things," he said.

But the valet demurred.

"I'm afraid you can't, sir," he said. "The coat seems to be cut, sir. I didn't find it out till a moment ago."

He held up a dinner-coat whose left breast had been bisected by a long, straight cut.

Leroy looked up from the note.

"Yes; they nearly got me that time, didn't they, Jarvis?" he asked. "Get out my other coat. . . . Yes!" he went on, referring again to the note, which he still held in his hand. "It's the last time, Jarvis. Henceforth I'm going to be disgustingly moral. I'm expecting to be married soon, Jarvis."

"Indeed, sir?"

"Yes; very soon. Perhaps extremely soon. I started something to-night that may work out with startling speed. Her father doesn't like me, you know, Jarvis. She likes me, though; but—well, she'd hesitate ordinarily. I got father to jump on me in her presence to-night. That made her think me a terribly abused individual, an——" Leroy stopped, the current of his thought seemed to change. "Wonder what the devil the old man's got on me, anyhow?" he muttered. "Pshaw! It's only generalities. It can't be anything else."

The valet nodded understandingly.

"I take it the lady has money of her own, sir," he suggested.

"She has; she has, Jarvis. Not that she needs it, though I do. She's—she's—— Hang it all, Jarvis, I'm really in love at last."

"Quite so, sir. Everybody is sooner or later, sir. The low shoes, I think you said, sir."

Meanwhile John in the library was working away with desperate speed. His thoughts seemed to come faster than he could put them upon paper. Page after page he covered, as if determined to finish his story at a sitting. But in the midst of his toil a servant entered.

"Two police officers and two other men are here, asking to see you, sir," he reported.

John looked up perplexedly.

"Two police officers?" he echoed. "To see me? That's strange. And with two other men? What sort of men?"

"They looked like Italians, sir. Pretty tough-looking persons, sir, since you ask me."

"Most extraordinary! Well, ask them to come in."

As the man went out, John laid his pen down regretfully. Apparently the current of his thought was broken, for he sat silent while he waited for the visitors to enter. When at last they did, he arose to meet them.

The officers were typical New York policemen, big and strong. The two prisoners, for John decided at once that they were prisoners, were very clearly Italians, and were quite as villainous-looking as the footman had asserted. John, however, knowing the race very well, realized that their villainousness might very well be merely apparent, and that a shave and a hair-cut would make both of them not merely respectable-looking but really handsome.

Curiously he went forward.

"You wanted to see me, officer?" he asked, addressing the officer who seemed to be in charge.

The officer stared at him hesitantly. Clearly he was perplexed by John's scholarly air.

"Yes, sir," he said. "I reckon we do, if you're Mr. Scott."

"I am Mr. Scott. My cousin, Mr. Leroy Scott, lives with me. Perhaps——"

"Oh!" The officer nodded instant confirmation. "It's him we want to see, all right," he declared. "I thought you weren't Mr. Leroy, though you do favor him a lot. These are the men that tried to knife him last night."

The two prisoners were very clearly Italians, and were villainous-looking.

"Knife him? You mean——"

John's heart began to throb excitedly; he had never before come even so near as this to violence. He wondered why Leroy had not told him of it.

"Yes, sir; we caught 'em this morning and brought them around for him to identify. Not that there's any real doubt about their being the ones. If we could see Mr. Leroy——"

"Certainly; I'll send for him." John pressed a button on his desk and sent for Leroy. "My cousin didn't tell me anything about being attacked," he said. "Probably he didn't think it serious. He seems to have a good many adventures."

The two officers looked at each other. Then the senior chuckled.

"You told the truth there, so you did, sir," he agreed. "Mr. Leroy sure is a hellyon when it comes to trouble. He can raise more Cain in less time than any young gent on Broadway, and that's going some. That's why I didn't quite understand at first, sir. You've got Mr Leroy's features. Without your mustache you'd be a dead ringer for him, though you ain't got his devilish expression, begging your pardon, sir."

"Oh, not at all; not at all!" John laughed, but he did not feel any too happy. If the officers knew how he had longed for even a little of Leroy's "devilish expression."

Leroy entered jauntily.

"Hello, John," he called. "What's the idea?"

Then he caught sight of the Italians and jumped back with a quick motion of his hand to his hip-pocket, just as the prisoners saw him and sprang forward with snarls of rage. The next second, however, the two officers had jerked them back, and Leroy was coming forward again with apparent calmness.

"I didn't know you had visitors," he said. "It's quite a surprise. Hello Guiseppe! Hello, Iago! What are you pinched for?"

It was John who answered.

"The officers say they tried to knife you last night, Leroy!" he cried. "Why didn't you tell me about it."

Leroy pursed up his lips.

"Knife me?" he questioned. "Oh, pshaw! Nothing of the sort—merely a little tussle of no importance. You don't mean to say you pinched anybody for a trifle like that, do you, officer?"

The officer nodded.

"It wasn't reported to us as a trifle, Mr. Scott," he said. "The officer on the beat says they came mighty near croaking you."

"Bosh! He's seein' things. He's been consorting too long with the goats. Anyway, these aren't the men."

"Eh?"

"No; of course not. These are two old friends of mine, though I haven't seen them for some time. They weren't anywhere in the vicinity last night. You've got the wrong man, and, as I say, the whole thing didn't amount to anything, anyway."

The officer nodded slowly.

"Just as you say, sir," he agreed, though with somewhat heavy sarcasm. "I see they were friends of yours the minute you came in. I understand you refuse to identify them as your assailants, or to make any complaints, sir."

"I certainly do. If that's all you're holding them for, let them go at once."

The officer nodded. Doubtless he was used to such experiences and took them philosophically. John could see, however, that neither he nor his companion put the slightest faith in Leroy's disclaimers. No one, in fact, who had seen the Italians' burst of rage could have put faith in them. With the brief explanation that they would have to take the men back to the station-house, the officers led the prisoners away.

The moment they were gone, John turned to Leroy.

"Look here, old man," he exclaimed. "Those are the men who tried to kill you. Anybody can see that with half an eye. Why on earth did you let them go?"

Leroy laughed. "Oh, pshaw!" he protested. "What's the use of sending a couple of good fellows to jail just because they had a little too much wine and got excited. Guiseppe and Iago are all right."

"Humph!" John sniffed disgustedly. "You're too chivalrous by half. Those men may have been drunk when they attacked you, but they weren't drunk to-night, and they wanted to attack you again. Anybody could see that, and they'll try again some other time. What are they after you for, anyway?"

Leroy thrust his thumbs in the button-holes of his vest and leaned back and laughed.

"What are they after me for?" he roared. "My dear John, an Italian tries to kill a man for money, or for a woman. As you may guess, these fellows aren't after me about a woman; therefore——"

"Therefore you ought to put them away where they can't do you or anybody else any harm. But I guess you won't. Heavens, I wish I had half your nerve! Tell me about the fight. How did you escape? Did they take you unawares?"

"It was a near thing." Leroy nodded to himself seriously. "Yes, it was a very near thing. They stole on me from behind. I don't know what made me turn; I hadn't heard them, I'll swear. But I did turn just a second before it would have been too late, and of course they rushed me the minute I did. I hadn't time to think at all; but—well, you understand, one gets used to such things and learns to act instinctively. I jumped forward and toward the right—toward Guiseppe, out of Iago's reach. Guiseppe struck at me as I came. I grabbed his wrist—the wrist of the arm that held the knife. He jerked, too, but I didn't let go. I swung clear around with him, still clutching his wrist, and before either of them could stop me I had made Guiseppe drive his knife into Iago's left arm, or into his side—I didn't know which. He gave a howl and staggered back. Then out of the tail of my eye I saw people come rushing up, and I cleared out. I didn't want to figure in any police court scraps. That's why I lied out of it to-night."

John's eyes were gleaming with admiration.

"Show me how you did it," he begged. "Maybe some fellow will charge me some night, and I'll have to defend myself. Here, take this paper-knife and——"

But Leroy was snatching out his watch.

"Good Lord! I'm late!" he cried, as he scanned its face. "Say, old man, I'm awfully sorry, but I've got to run. Some other time, if you don't mind. Good-night." With a rush he was out of the room.

John, left behind, shook his head slowly. Then he walked to the big mirror at the end of the room and stared into it.

"I look like a man," he muttered; "I really do. Why under heavens can't I act like one? Why does nothing ever happen to me? I'd give ten years of my life to have something happen to me—just once."

CHAPTER THREE

IN the big library no sound was heard but the scratching of John Scott's pen on the rough paper. John did not use a typewriter; he found, or thought he found, that his thoughts flowed quicker and better from the point of a pen. True, he recorded them more slowly, and his hand and wrist sometimes grew very weary; but he persevered.

His real trouble on this particular night was the difficulty he found in keeping his thoughts on his work. Despite his best efforts, they strayed away from the story and from the pile of written pages that was steadily growing beneath his hand and focused on Helen.

Make her the hero of his tale! Only too gladly would he do so if he could. But when he tried, he recognized more than ever before his inability to portray her, to make plain her sweetness and her charm and to do justice to the loveliness of her character. Perhaps he might have done better if he had not loved her so; but adoring her as he did, he found it impossible to do her justice, particularly in such a story as he was bound to write—a story in which he must make her do the stupid things that every heroine of romantic fiction must do, in order—if for no other reason—to give the even more stupid hero a chance to save her. He knew, did John, that only the villain must be allowed to show any pep until near the end of the tale, when the hero could come forward and win the heroine by some deed of derring-do.

With a sigh he picked up his pen once more. Then abruptly and sharply the telephone on his desk clamored forth, and he went to it.

"Hello," he said.

"Hello." The voice was Helen's. John recognized it instantly and a glad response leaped to his lips.

But before it could find utterance the girl went hastily on. "Father has spoken to me outrageously about that article in *Town Frolics*," she panted hysterically. "Outrageously. I won't stand it. If you want me——"

John's hair stood up on his head.

"Wha-wha-what?" he gasped. "I don't understand."

A pause followed, really short, but to John's strained nerves interminable. Then Helen's voice came again, more coldly.

"I beg your pardon," she said, "is this Mr. John Scott? I want to speak to your cousin, Mr. Leroy Scott. Is he there?"

The light went out of John's eyes.

"He has gone out, I believe," he answered miserably. "Perhaps his valet will know where to reach him. If you'll hold the wire I'll find out."

When Jarvis, hastily summoned, came an instant later, John strove to speak calmly.

"Miss Merton is on the wire, Jarvis," he said. "She seems to want to find Mr. Leroy at once. Please tell her what you know of him."

"Yes, sir; certainly, sir." Jarvis picked up the telephone. "Yes; this is Mr. Leroy's man. Yes, miss. I quite understand, miss. I'll try to find him at once and tell him to call you up, miss. Yes, miss. Certainly."

After Jarvis had gone, John sat still for a long time, staring miserably into vacancy. Then he went across to the big table whereon the magazines were piled, and sought until he found the copy of the *Town Frolics* and the article of which Helen had spoken as having roused the ire of her father.

It was brief. Bearing no names, it hinted clearly at the forthcoming announcement of Leroy's marriage to Helen.

Twice John read it. Then he let the paper flutter from his hand to the floor and staggered back to his desk.

Now, if never before, he knew that Helen was lost to him, wholly and finally. Leroy had taken her from him, ignorantly perhaps, but certainly. John did not blame Leroy; he did not blame Helen. He felt that Leroy was the better man and deserved the better—no, the best girl. How could he hope to compete with splendid, dashing Leroy. But, oh, the misery of it!

After a time he picked up his pen. He had no heart for further waiting. Still, he had promised and he would keep his word. Slowly and miserably he began to write.

But he did not write long. The despair that burned in his heart was too deep to be crushed. After a while he got up and slowly ascended the stairs to Leroy's room.

Usually, he knew, the room was in apple-pie order, kept so by Jarvis' unfailing labors; but this time it was different. Clearly Helen's urgent summons had forced Jarvis to hurry away in the midst of his work, leaving things in disarray. On the bed, for instance, lay Leroy's evening dress, tumbled and crushed. John did not know that it was the suit that Leroy had discarded because of the cut across the heart, though he recognized it as Leroy's by its ultra-sporting twist.

Wonderingly he gazed around the room. Signs of Leroy's presence, indescribable but unmistakable, were everywhere. Miserably John strove to interpret them; miserably he wondered if he could absorb from them the dash and the vim that he had always seen in Leroy.

Was he really so different from Leroy. The policemen had said that except for his mustache he would be a "dead ringer" for him. Perhaps—— He looked around. Yes! Leroy's shaving materials were still on the dresser beneath the shaving mirror. With sudden determination John crossed to the stand. Fiercely he flung off coat and collar and snatched up Leroy's razor and swiftly he hacked off his long silky mustache. Then he turned to the bed and the bureau, and swifter than ever he proceeded to array himself in Leroy's evening clothes. He did not notice the cut across the coat; probably if he had he would have regarded it merely as a mute testimonial to Leroy's dashing valor and skill in his combat of the night before.

With an imitation of Leroy's swagger, so accurate that one seeing it might have guessed that he had practised it for days, he marched out of the room and down the stairs into the library. Up to the great mirror at the end of the room he strode, and once more gazed at himself in its pictured depths. Then he gasped. It might have been Leroy's very self that he saw there.

Then suddenly the fancy faded. He was not Leroy; he was John, and he always would be John—shy, poky, shame-faced John, fit only to write of other men's deeds—unfit to do deeds for himself. Abruptly his shoulders sagged, his eye faded, and his lips drooped; and as instantly his likeness to Leroy vanished. No one would have mistaken his identity now. Shamefacedly he shambled back to the desk and miserably he picked up his pen.

Once more its scratch, scratch broke the silence.

Meanwhile the patrol wagon with the officers and their prisoners was rattling across town to the precinct station.

The sergeant at the desk looked up as they entered then dropped his head again and corrugated his brows in an effort to understand some fine points that were being explained to him by a slim man in gray, with a keen, intelligent face.

"If I get you, Mr. Maxwell," he said at last, while Collins and the others waited, "there's just three things to watch for—Lincoln's nose, the eagle's middle left claw and a broken curl in the vignette on the lower left of the back."

The man in gray nodded.

"That's right," he said. "There are other things, of course, but these are the most apparent. They're unmistakable when you once know them." The speaker was folding up some papers as he spoke. His eyes rested on Collins and his prisoners. "Who's this?" he asked.

"Some guys we sent out to be identified." The sergeant beckoned to Collins. "Nothing in your line, Mr. Maxwell," he added.

Leaving his prisoners in charge of his assistant, Collins came forward to the desk. He glanced at Maxwell hesitantly.

The sergeant, however, ignored his look.

"Well," he asked, "d'ye see Leroy Scott? What's he say?"

"Says they ain't the men."

"Wha-a-t? Officer Jackson saw them."

Collins laughed. "Oh, Leroy was lyin'," he said; "not a doubt about that. They're the men, all right. He recognized them the minute he came in the room. They recognized him, too, and they tried to get at him. He knew what they was after, an' he was scared, all right, till he saw we had them fast. Then he came forward and done a song-an'-dance. Said the scrap wasn't anything, and that these weren't the men, anyhow. Oh, he done it well. An' I'll say this for him, he hadn't told that cousin of his nothin' about it."

"Cousin?"

"Name of John. Dead ringer for Leroy if he'd shave off the droopy mustache of his an' get a little more pep into him. But I guess he won't do it. He's one of the knowledgaceous guys. He was excited a whole lot when he heard of the scrap. He looked at Leroy as if he was

the real cheese, an' no mistake. Which he is, of course, in a way, though I guess he ain't the cheese that John thinks he is. Anyhow, Leroy won't make a charge."

Maxwell had pricked up his ears.

"Are you talking of Leroy Scott of West Ninety-fifth street?" he asked. Then, receiving a nod, he went on: "I'm interested in him, for reasons. Why do you suppose he refuses to prosecute? Does he object to appearing in court?"

Collins looked at the man in gray hesitantly, as if wondering who he was. Then he glanced at the sergeant, who explained briefly.

"This is Mr. Maxwell, of the Secret Service," he said. "Answer his questions."

Collins nodded. Then he turned quickly to the man in gray.

"Naw! He don't object to goin' to court, Leroy don't," he said. "He's been in court plenty of times before. He can't hurt his reputation none. I reckon he refused to charge 'em because he was afraid to. You can't tell about dagos, you know. The barber where you get shaved may be a pal of theirs an' may lay for you; or the waiter at your restaurant may be just a-waiting to get even by puttin' a bug in your soup."

"Well, what's the connection between him and them? Have you any idea?"

Collins shook his head.

"Mighty little," he admitted. "They're brothers—hucksters; seem to work pretty hard; never been arrested before. When we pulled them they put up a roar and said they were friends of Ferrari; he's the big Italian boss, you know. That's why we took 'em around to Scott's before we booked them. I don't know what Leroy's got to do with them, unless he's running after their sister Teresa. She dances, you know; an' she's some swell looker, believe me."

"Oh!" The Secret Service man looked disgusted. "I hoped it was something different from that," he said. "That's all, sergeant; much obliged. You'll keep your eyes open on that matter I spoke of?"

"Sure thing." The sergeant was feeling in his desk. As Maxwell turned away, he drew out a handful of miscellaneous articles, including a roll of bills, a few coins, a knife, a key, and sundry papers. "We'll have to let those fellows go, Collins," he said. "Tell them to come over here and get their property." Then he turned back to the Secret Service man. "Course I'll keep a lookout," he promised; "but I'm guessin' you're wasting your time around here. I haven't heard even a mention of any of the queer."

"Humph! You haven't?" Maxwell was gazing with knitted brows at the bills that lay on the desk waiting for their owners to reclaim them. As he spoke he picked one up and scrutinized it closely. Then he looked up suddenly.

"Where are those men?" he demanded sharply.

"What men? Those dagos? Right over—— Hey, there, Officer Collins, where are your men?"

Collins, who was crossing the room toward the back, turned at the sergeant's hail.

But the Secret Service man did not wait for him to speak. Instead, he rushed to the door of the station and darted out.

Collins stared after him. Then he turned to the sergeant.

"I turned them loose," he said, "an' told them to get their property an'——"

He had no time to say more, for Maxwell shot back in at the door and up to the desk just as the sergeant, startled by his departure and even more startled by his return, scrambled to his feet.

"Anything wrong, sir?" he began.

Maxwell ignored the question.

"The money you took from those men are the counterfeiters I asked you to watch out for," he said rapidly. "They must have noticed me examining that bill and have fled the minute they could. That's pretty good proof of guilt. Where can we find them?" He looked at Collins.

Collins did not hesitate.

"They live on Avenue A," he said swiftly; "but they've been pretending to work for a man named Crook on Thirtieth street. I got an idea he's been stakin' them."

"Good! We'll go there first."

CHAPTER FOUR

LEROY left the Scott house hurriedly; but once outside he moderated his speed. At the nearest crossing he stopped altogether, stood looking now one way and now the other, as if undecided in which direction to go. Finally he thrust his hand into his pocket, pulled out a roll of bills, and counted them roughly but swiftly. Then he swore.

"That settles it," he growled. "I'll have to see Crook. I guess it's just as well after all. My fond cousin is right in one thing, anyway. Those dagos are dangerous. Heavens, if he knew how dangerous they really are. Crook's got to call them off, or I'll quit him. He'll do it, all right. Crook can't afford to lose me."

Unhesitating now, Leroy turned and walked rapidly to where lights, strung high above the pavement, showed the presence of an elevated railway station. As he went he laughed.

"Lord, but John's a fool!" he gurgled. "He'll swallow anything. 'May have to defend himself, and wants to know how!' Well, if he tries to handle a couple of footpads the way I told him, somebody'll inherit his insurance money, and that's no lie. Maybe it'll be me. Not that I want any harm to come to old John. He's a good old sport."

The rattle of an approaching train sounded just as Leroy reached the elevated station. Swiftly he ran up the steps and slipped on board an instant before the gate clanged.

His destination was a tenement on one of the cross streets on the East Side, not far from Madison Square—a neighborhood whose condition is incomprehensible to strangers who have heard so much of the enormous value of land in the Iron City. Block after block of small, narrow, three-story houses seem to give the lie to all tales of value and to make ridiculous all assertions that people are stuffed into them so tightly that they yield profits greater than would accrue from larger and more expen-

sive domiciles. Certainly the building, up whose stairs Leroy mounted, was not crowded, although it was nighttime, when if ever the toilers of the city might be expected to be at home. Moreover, the room on the top floor, at whose door Leroy rapped in peculiar fashion, proved to be occupied by only a single man.

This man looked up as Leroy came in.

"Hello, Leroy," he said lazily. "I was expecting you to-night. I hear you dropped a roll at Frenchy's place last night."

Leroy's face darkened.

"I was robbed," he protested sullenly.

"Eh? What?" Crook shook with silent laughter. "Robber! You darned thief! You're a nice one to grudge other thieves their pickings, especially as you discount all debts at fifty per cent. Well, how much do you want to-night?" From a drawer in the battered old desk at which he sat he drew out a bundle wrapped in dirty brown paper and opened it, disclosing a great pile of bills. "Say when," he directed, as he began to count them off.

"When!" quoth Leroy sullenly, almost at once. "I'm short to-night." He threw down a much smaller roll of bills. "Damn you, Crook! You ought to give me credit. This cash business is a regular hold-up."

"Credit? I do give you credit—credit for being a bilk and a beat. No, Friend Leroy, I don't have to trust you and I don't intend to. I never trust a gambler, for one thing." He picked up the bills that Leroy had thrown down, and counted and examined them carefully, then pushed over the ones that he himself had counted out. "Here's your money," he finished. "You make fifty per cent. on every dollar of it."

Sullenly Leroy took the counterfeits and thrust them into his pocket.

"All right," he said; "but you've got to do one thing for me. You've got to call off Guiseppe and Iago. The devils tried to knife me last night and came infernally near doing it. I had to fight like a wildcat to stop them."

"Eh? You fought?"

"Certainly I fought. What——"

"Congratulate you. I didn't think you had the spunk to fight, even for your life." Scorn spoke in Crook's voice. "Why in hades don't you keep away from that sister of theirs. You know dagos will stand for anything but fooling with their women-kind. You let her alone hereafter—understand?"

"Oh, I'm willing enough to let her alone. It's a case of her not letting me alone. She actually expects me to marry her. But"—with sudden fierceness—"you've got to make them stop. The cops recognized them last night and recognized me, too, and they arrested them to-day and brought them to me to identify, and I had to swear that it was all bunk. And the cops know that I was lying at that. They'll be getting wise the first thing we know."

"Damn!" Crook jumped to his feet. "If you——"

He stopped short as a peculiar series of taps sounded at the door; then he pulled a cord that released the lock and let the door swing open.

Through the portal the two Italians burst in and stopped, blinking in the sudden light. Then they saw Leroy and plunged toward him. They were unarmed. Any weapons they might have had were in the possession of the police; but their gripping fingers showed that they purposed to take vengeance with their bare hands.

With a womanish cry of terror, Leroy shrank back. But Crook sprang forward, grasped the two Italians by their collars and flung them across the room.

"Here, what the devil you trying to do?" he raged.

Sullenly the men picked themselves up from the floor. They glared at Leroy furiously; but they did not attempt to attack him again. From their snarling lips they poured out a flood of oaths and threats.

Crook listened with a frown. Then he spoke.

"Well, he'll let her alone hereafter," he growled, when the men stopped. "You hear?" He swung on Leroy. "You let the girl alone, or you'll settle with me. Get that? Well, remember it. As for you two"—he turned back to the Italians—"you want to understand that men working for me have got to attend to business. Family quarrels don't go—see? Now"—once more he turned to Leroy—"you'd better go. Guiseppe and Iago won't trouble you any more."

Leroy needed no second permission. He had recovered his air of bravado, but not his big booming voice.

"All right," he whimpered, and crept away.

When he had gone, Crook sat down and laughed.

"The big stiff," he growled; "don't bother about him, boys. He ain't worth it; an' besides, I won't stand for it. He's too valuable. He works off more of the queer in a day than you do in a month; and he takes most of the risks, too. What's that? Oh, your sister, eh? Well, I'll own up that's pretty tough. Say, you listen to me. You let this dub alone for three or four mnoths, and I'll turn him over to you. Three or four months is about as long as we're likely to last here in New York. When things begin to look bad we'll move to Chicago, and——"

The two men looked at each other with suddenly blanched faces; then they turned simultaneously to Crook.

"They look-a bad now," gasped Guiseppe.

The words were not fear-inspiring; but the man's voice and manner were. They struck home to Crook's consciousness. He sprang to his feet.

"What's up?" he cried. "Damn you, what's up?"

"Everything. The police take-a da money from us. When they go to give-a back, they see it is much queer. Iago and I see them look-a and we run."

"What? Why the deuce didn't you tell me before? Did they follow you? Do you know? Oh, what's the use. Get out of here! Get out, I say; get—— Hold on. Where is it that sister of yours works? Out at Frenchy's, ain't it? All right. Get out there as quick as the Lord'll let you. I'll be out and join you before midnight and we'll take her and clear out. Git!"

The two Italians needed no further telling. Crook's tones and gestures were enough. Without a word they fled out of the room and down the stairs, tumbling, catching at the rickety banisters, recovering themselves and speeding on. At the bottom at last they ran for the street-door and flung themselves through it just as Collins and Maxwell, with the officers behind them, appeared in the opening.

Guiseppe could not have stopped if he had wished; but he did not wish. Fairly and squarely his rushing body struck Collins, bowled him over upon those behind, and

sent the whole force staggering and falling backward down the two or three steep and narrow steps that led upward from the pavement. Through the gap Guiseppe leaped, followed by Iago, and fled away in the one second's grace allowed him.

Roaring like a bull, Collins leaped to his feet. But before he could follow Maxwell had grabbed him.

"Let them go!" he panted. "They're small fry. We want the big fish. Which room? Quick, which room?"

Like a bull curbed in his rush, Collins swung around, staggering back with the checked momentum of his rush. Into the hallway and up the stairs he rushed, Maxwell and the others hard upon his heels. Their pounding feet echoed through the house.

At the top at last, Collins flung himself against Crook's door and burst it open, and through it the police irrupted.

But they were too late. Crook had fled, probably by way of the roof. On the floor, dropped in his haste, lay a single counterfeit bill, mute testimony to the accuracy with which Collins had led the others to the counterfeiter's den.

CHAPTER FIVE

IN the library John was working harder than before. His wrist, tired by the continual pushing of the pen across the paper, grew cramped, and he stood up to flex it and try to restore it to its former vigor. Then he put a new pen in his holder, guessing that the scratching of the worn point against the paper might have added to his labor. In the stress of the story he had succeeded in forcing Helen into the back of his mind, but the cessation of work brought her to the front again. When he tried once more to write, he found it almost impossible to begin. When the telephone rang, he welcomed it as an excuse for further delay.

From the hook he took the receiver and held it to his ear. "Hello," he called.

"Hello, is this Mr. Scott—Mr. Leroy Scott?" demanded a voice.

John explained that Leroy was out and that he did not know when he would be back.

"Humph! I guessed he would be," came back the voice. "Well, you tell him that the deuce has broke loose and that it's all his fault. Tell him to call me up here—Grand 41144. I'll be here for about an hour. After that I won't—see?"

John admitted that he saw, and the telephone clicked dismissal. Then John turned back to the table and made an exact record of the message. He wondered dully on what sort of new romantic episode Leroy had embarked. Adventure seemed to seek him at all hours of the day and night. With all his heart John envied him. Especially he envied him Helen's summons, but he refused to think of that. He could not bear to consider its possibilities. Dully he went to the hall and fastened the note in the big pier-glass, where Leroy would be sure to see it when he came in. Even if he should hear Leroy come in before he finished his work for the night and went to bed, he did not feel that he could talk with him.

Back at his desk, he rang for the butler.

"Phillips," he said, "you needn't stay up any longer. I'll be late. Leave the door on latch for Mr. Leroy, lock up the rest of the house, and go to bed. And—— Oh, yes. Close the library-door as you out. I don't wish to be disturbed again to-night."

The butler bowed. John's face was in deep shadow and his voice was his own, so that the butler did not notice any change.

"Yes, sir," he said, and went out.

When he had gone, John picked up his pen; but as he put it to the paper, he hesitated, his thoughts wondering far afield. Where had Jarvis gone to seek Leroy? Would he be able to find him? He had seemed rather confident. But would his confidence be justified?

John had never heard of Frenchy's. He did not know that the place existed.

But Jarvis knew it very well, and although he would not have admitted it to either Helen or John, he knew that sooner or later that night Leroy would be there. Jarvis figured out that he would be there later, and that he himself could reach the place almost, if not quite, as soon. He might have telephoned; but he knew it would take Frenchy's people long to find Leroy, even if he were already there; and he decided not to lose time in the attempt. He felt that Helen's message was important and he did not dare to let it wait for an instant longer than he must.

So he started.

At last, by elevated road and then by auto, he reached the place and hurried toward the side door. Almost on its threshold he stopped.

A girl had come out—a girl in scanty dancing costume, whose extravagant make-up did not conceal the dark skin and flashing eyes that spoke of Southern ancestry. She came out hurriedly and stood peering, as if in search of some one. Jarvis was sure he had seen her before; but for a moment he could not place her. As he stood wrinkling his brows in a vain attempt to remember, two men whom he did not know slipped from the shadows to her side and began to speak to her in a flood of rushing Italian.

Instantly Jarvis placed the three. They were Guiseppe and Iago, and the woman was their sister. Jarvis, of course, knew nothing of Crook's assignment of the road-house as a meeting-place; he knew only that it was Leroy's favorite resort—the resort where he had first met Teresa—and remembering the assault of the night before he could guess but one reason for their presence. He did not speak Italian, so he did not lose time in any effort to hear what the man said, though he noticed that their words seemed to appal the girl. Instead, he hurried directly in to seek the master and warn him.

Once inside he had no trouble in finding Leroy. Through the smoke and the rattle and the laughter his eyes went straight to the noisiest place of all. And there sat Leroy.

Half a dozen small tables had been shoved together to make a single one, at which a dozen men and women were sitting, all half-drunk and all wholly intoxicated with the glare and the glitter of the throng. Past and around them pretty girls in startling costumes and extravagant make-ups were spinning and kicking high in air, while they sang rollicking, if nonsensical, ditties that ended with choruses that snapped like whips. Everywhere was the iridescence of gems and the shimmer of

silk; everywhere the sparkle of wine, the glitter of light, the curl of tobacco and the staccato of laughter.

As Jarvis pressed closer, he saw Teresa hurry in and come spinning down the hall in a *pas seul* that acclaimed her talent. Nearer and ever nearer she came to Leroy. Never once did she take her eyes from him. By the very intensity of her gaze she seemed to try to compel his notice.

But Leroy refused to look at her. Perhaps he really did not know that she was there, and perhaps he remembered Crook's warning to "let her alone." Whatever his reason, he refused to meet her eyes, in which a smoldering resentment burned hotter and ever hotter.

Through the throng the valet made his unobtrusive way to Leroy's side. Over his shoulders he bent and gave his message — the message from Helen. Of the two Italians he spoke no word. Helen's message, he knew, would be enough to rouse his master.

It was more than enough. Leroy sprang to his feet without even a word of excuse to his companions and hurried out, leaving them staring.

Without a word to Jarvis he hurried to the telephone-booth and closed the door behind him.

Half a dozen small tables had been shoved together at which a dozen men and women were sitting.

Left outside, close by one of the big windows, Jarvis went to it and stared out, wondering if by chance he might catch a glimpse of Teresa's brothers. To do so might mean life or death for Leroy.

Fortune favored him. He spied the Italians just as they came out from behind a row of parked automobiles and sat down on a bench beneath a tree. An instant later Jarvis saw the gleam of a match and understood that they had begun to smoke—fairly good evidence that they had settled down to wait for some one—probably for Leroy.

Meanwhile Leroy was in the booth. Helen must have been very near her end of the wire, for almost instantly she answered in person.

"Oh, I'm so glad you've called," she cried in a whisper that was like a suppressed scream. "Father found that article in *Town Frolics* to-night and he is furious. He says you had it put in, and——"

"I? Never! I saw it only an hour ago. I'll kill the editor of the miserable sheet to-morrow." Wrath, well assumed, spoke in Leroy's voice.

But the girl's answer came quick.

"Never mind," she shrilled. "Father spoke to me terribly to-night—in a way I can never forgive. I mean to leave his house forever. If you want me, I'll marry you this very night."

Leroy gasped. Matters had moved more swiftly than even he had hoped. Then he broke into a torrent of excited jubilation.

At last he stopped and looked at his watch.

"I've got to go home to change my day-clothes," he said; "but we needn't wait for that. You know my man Jarvis? I'll send him for you right away. Watch from your window, and when he waves a handkerchief from across the street come out and join him. Bring your maid with you if you like. Jarvis will have a taxi at the corner and will bring you to the Little Church. I'll get there almost as quickly as you can. You'll come?"

"I will!" Helen's assent was instant and decided. Then she hesitated. "I called you up at your house first," she explained, "and your cousin John answered. I thought it was you—your voices are very much alike sometimes—and I said—— Oh, I don't know just what I said; but I think he must suspect. So if he——"

Leroy broke in with a laugh.

"That's all right," he chortled. "Old John's all right. He'll help us if necessary."

But Helen drew the line at this.

"No; I'd rather not ask him," she demurred. "Don't tell him anything, please. I mentioned it so that you'd understand if he asked you about it."

"All right, dearest. I guess you're right, after all. John is such an old stick-in-the-mud that he might feel it his duty to object. He hasn't a bit of sporting blood."

Helen did not seem to like this very much. At least she cut the conversation quickly.

"Oh, yes," she said, "I'll be ready when Jarvis comes. Good-by till then." The telephone clicked on the hook.

Jubilant, chuckling with delight, Leroy burst out of the booth.

"It's all right, Jarvis," he cried. "Everything's all right. I'm going to be married to-night. Now, I want you to—— What the devil's the matter?"

"This, sir!" Jarvis pointed toward the window. "Those two Italian persons have followed you out here, sir. They've been talking with Signorina Teresa, and now they're waiting in the grounds. I fear they mean mischief, sir."

An oath half-uttered changed to a chuckle on Leroy's lips.

"Oh, be hanged to them!" he cried lightly. Leroy always lived in the immediate moment and took little thought of the possibilities of the future. "Be hanged to them! We'll leave them to wait. I'll go out the other way. Stay here for ten minutes after I'm gone. Then tell the crowd I was dining with that I've gone. Tell 'em anything; tell 'em I've got the croup, if you like. Then hurry back to town. I want you to go for Miss Merton and her maid."

Hurriedly he explained the details of the valet's errand, then raced away to the exit on the other side of the house.

Left alone, Jarvis glanced at the Italians and saw that they had not moved. Then he drew out his watch, looked at it, and waited impassively till the ten minutes were up. Then he went into the dining-room.

At the other tables the fun had grown fast and furious, but at Leroy's the master spirit was lacking and the spice had failed. As the valet appeared, the diners recognized him and hailed him.

"Hello, Jarvis! Hello!" they cried. "Where's Leroy?"

Teresa was hovering near. At the question she danced closer, bending her head to listen.

Jarvis noticed; but he did not care. He knew that Leroy was well out of reach.

"Mr. Leroy's gone home, sir," he said. "He said to tell you he had the croup, sir."

"Eh? What's that?" The diners began to jump up confusedly.

But Jarvis did not wait to give explanation. The moment he had delivered his message he turned away and vanished into the crowd.

Teresa, shocked into quietude, ceased her pirouetting and stood glaring after him. Then behind her she heard an uproar.

"Hey, boys," clamored a voice, "you going to let Leroy ditch us thash-away? Lesh go after him and rout him out. Make him come back. Come on, boysh; come on."

Wild acclaim followed, and with one accord Leroy's guests clambered to their feet and rushed from the room.

CHAPTER SIX

ELATED, chuckling to himself, Leroy sped homeward. All his troubles were over—or soon would be. No longer would he have to depend on Crook's niggardly pay; no longer would he have to accept John's charity, freely given as it was. In an hour he would be son-in-law to one of the richest men in town. When all was said and done, Banker Merton would surrender and would provide for him and for Helen. He had studied the man, and he was sure of it. The rest of his life would be one long course of plenty.

Besides, he was really very fond of Helen.

Rapidly he ran up the steps of the Scott house and let himself in at the door. As he hung his hat on the old-fashioned rack he spied John's note and picked it up.

"What in thunder does John want now?" he muttered. "More jiu-jitsu, I suppose."

He unfolded the paper and read the message. Then, frowningly, he started up the stairs, rereading it as he went.

What did Crook want at that time of night, he wondered. What sort of "hell" had broken loose. It must be something connected with the Italians, he decided. Crook had learned that they were following him, and wished to warn him. Well, he did not need the warning; he knew where the dagos were and he was perfectly willing to let them stay there. In another hour he would be well out of reach. Almost he decided not to call up at all. A moment later, however, he thought better of it.

Crook was on the wire immediately.

"Hello! That you, Leroy?" he rasped. "Damn lucky you called up when you did. I was just going. Say, you want to get out of town just as quick as the Lord'll let you. The Secret Service is on."

"What?" Leroy turned green.

"Yes; they're on, and they're on through you, you infernal slob. Those dagos had some of the stuff on them when they were pinched, and the cops caught on it to-night—see? They got here after them, just after you had gone. We all got away; but the game's up."

"But—but——" Leroy was quaking with terror. "But who told them about me?"

"About you? Nobody told 'em about you; but they'll guess aplenty pretty quick. Don't you make any mistake about that. They ain't fools, an' they'll dope out the connection all right. You burn all the stuff you've got, an' if you know what's good for you, light out. But do as you please about that. I didn't call you up for your health. I called you to tell you that if you're pinched you ain't to mention me—see? They ain't got any proof against me an' I don't mean them to get any. You take notice. If you snitch I'll murder you when I get out—understand?"

Crook's voice grew cold and menacing as he finished. Before Leroy could answer, the telephone clicked.

White as the proverbial sheet, shaking from head to foot and damp with a sweat that seemed to leech the strength from his bones, Leroy hung up the receiver and staggered to a chair. Ruin had come at last—come at the very moment when he had thought to see the fruition of all his hopes.

For two years and more he had lived on the fat of the land, flinging money broadcast, reveling in the White Lights of Broadway. Whatever fear of the police he had felt at the beginning had long since passed away. Never once had any one showed the least suspicion of the notes. Always and everywhere they had passed easily and freely. No rumor of the discovery of a new counterfeit had appeared in the newspapers; no suggestion that the Secret Service was on the track of its makers. And now the blow had fallen hard.

"What harm had he done?" he asked himself desperately. What difference did the passing of the money make to anybody? So long as it did pass no one lost anything by it. And it had passed freely and easily. Probably it had been detected only when it had grown ragged enough to be sent to the Treasury for redemption. Then, of course, the banks that deposited it had lost it. Well, the banks had plenty of money. They could afford to lose. Why should he lose, be torn from the life he loved and sent to a horrible penitentiary merely to please a few banks? Desperately he wrung his hands.

What should he do? What could he do? He had lost Helen, of course. He must flee, of course. But whither should he flee? He had no money, except the remainder of counterfeit bills that he had received from Crooks that very night. True, they would pass; but there were very few of them, and what should he do when they were gone?

An idea buzzed into his brain and brought him to his feet. Suppose he went on with his plans for the night? Suppose he married Helen; her father was a banker; he had influence at Washington; he would have to exert it to save his son-in-law. Perhaps he could save him; and even if he failed to stop the prosecution he would have to help his son-in-law to escape. Things could be hushed up. At the worst, Merton would have to send his daughter money. Yes, he would marry her at once—within the hour. She should save him—she should.

He hesitated and dropped back into his chair. Desperate as he was, he was not quite so bad as that. He could not, would not, do it. Besides, he knew only too well that the Secret Service was not to be choked off by any such proceedings. To marry Helen would not save him and would involve her in life-long ruin. No! He was not quite so bad as that. He would flee alone—and instantly.

He turned to the dressing-room, then paused, as he noticed on the bed the clothes that John had discarded. On them he pounced. He knew they were John's, and he did not stop to wonder how or why they came there. They were there, and that was enough. They were exactly what he wanted—quiet, decent, handsome clothes that looked as if they might fit him—clothes that would make the best sort of disguise. With them he could even pass for John at a pinch. Swiftly he stripped off his own garments and got into John's; swiftly he packed a suitcase with all that it would hold; swiftly and silently he slipped down the stairs and hurried from the house, heading for the railway station.

Just in time! Two minutes after he had gone the half-tipsy mob from Frenchy's swarmed up the steps and clamored at the door.

John was writing furiously, and at first he did not hear them. He had reached the turning-point in his story, and was bringing retribution to bear upon his "villain." This was congenial work; and he was buried fathoms deep in the fancies of his brain; but at last the banging and ringing at the door roused him. Frowningly he listened; then, remembering that he had sent the butler to bed, he arose from his chair and went to the door. He had entirely forgotten that he wore Leroy's clothes, and probably would not have cared if he had remembered it.

Rather irritably, for he disliked being interrupted when his thoughts were running so smoothly, he jerked open the door and looked out to see what manner of men they were who came knocking in that uproarious fashion at twelve o'clock at night.

He found out promptly. The revelers recognized him, or thought they did. In through the broad door they swarmed, whooping, and closed around him.

"Leroy! Leroy!" they shouted.

Then John remembered his masquerade. Horrified, he shrank back, back, back to the library and inside it. These intruders did not look dangerous; in fact, they looked friendly and they certainly acted so; but they appalled John's rectilinear soul. Besides, he wanted to get them into a stronger light, where they might see for themselves that he was not Leroy. He recognized the futility of trying to explain by word of mouth. He knew that he could not even make himself heard above the clamor. So he fell back.

But the stronger light did not seem to help him. It merely incited the revelers to greater rapture. Instantly they grabbed hands and danced around him, singing; then, ending in a roar of laughter, they swarmed upon him, each man talking loudly and tipsily. John could not understand half they said, but he realized that they still thought that he was Leroy, and that they wanted him to go back with them to some place from which they supposed that he had just slipped away. As despairingly he tried to explain, he caught sight of his reflection in the tall mirror and stopped short. So like he seemed to Leroy that even he himself was almost deceived.

But disgust grew in his heart. Was this the crowd with which his dashing cousin consorted? This half-drunken, wine-flushed, staggering rout that had profaned his quiet home? His gorge arose at them; his feelings were so mirrored in his face that even a half-sober man—had such been among the revelers—could not have helped but read them. Actually he opened his mouth to order the party out.

And then the idea came.

He had wanted to see what the night-life of the city was. He had wanted to join in the revels. He had envied Leroy. He had complained because no chance for adventure had ever come to him. And now, when the chance offered, he was about to throw it aside. He would not do it. He would grasp it! Now or never was his chance. These people thought that he was Leroy. Well, then he would be Leroy to them. For this one night he would be Leroy! He might play the part badly, for he had had no chance to learn the rôle; but he would play it with all his strength.

Instantly he let out a wild whoop—such a whoop as he had never dreamed himself capable of uttering.

"Hit her up, boys! Hit her up!" He did not know what else to say. The shibboleths of the gay world were unknown to him. "Here, come to the dining-room! Plenty of booze in the house! Hooray! Come on, come on!"

They heard him this time, and when he burst through their ranks and rushed toward the door they followed, cheering.

Into the dining-room he led them, tore open cellaret and cupboard, and handed out the bottles there. He did not know what he grasped, and he did not care. Sim-

ply he passed the bottles out. And after a while he followed the example of those around him and hammered off the neck of a bottle against the back of a chair, raised it to his lips, and quaffed what remained of its contents.

Whether inspired by the abandon of the moment, or by the touch of the wine, John burst instantly into a wilder jollity than he had ever known before. Furiously he cheered the rout on; but soon his spirits began to flag. Anybody could drink in his own house! It was not there that he could learn the things he desired to know.

"Hooray!" he yelled again. "Let's go back to the place, boys!" (He called it a place, because he did not know what else to call it.) "Let's go back. Come on! Hooray!"

With a roar the others answered him.

"Good old Leroy. Good old fellow! Come along! Wow, wow, wow!"

When he turned toward the door they followed him. Out and down the steps and into the waiting autos they swarmed.

Behind them the old butler, awakened by the uproar, stood on the steps and stared, amazed and scandalized. Then at last he shook his head sadly and went back into the house to find "Mr. John" and tell him how disgracefully "Mr. Leroy" had been behaving.

John neither knew nor cared. Caught in the whirl of the night, he was trying very hard to see it from the standpoint of his companions and to learn to enjoy it. He refused to think of either the past of the future. The moment—the moment—was enough for him. No longer did he follow; he led. The autos could not go fast enough to satisfy his hurrying soul.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE fun at Frenchy's had grown sodden. The foam had evaporated, the sparkle had vanished, and only the dregs remained. One by one the men and the women who had whooped it up in the earlier hours of the evening had reeled away to limousines and taxis, keeping up the gaiety—or the pretense of gaiety—till the last; or they had remained to grow more and more sodden with the climbing hours. Almost alone John retained his spirits and strove to force the gaiety. Desperately he drank, laughed, shouted and sang. Desperately he tried to persuade himself that he was enjoying himself; that he was not a quitter; that now that he had his chance he could grasp the fleeting moments and pin a golden hope on each as it fled.

But it was all in vain. Heavier and heavier grew the strain; harder and harder came even the pretense of enjoyment, and at last something snapped in his brain.

He stood up and looked about him, sweeping the great hall with eyes that saw—eyes that he permitted to see for the first time since he had entered. He noted the drunken men, the disheveled women, the worn-out waiters, the wine-stained tables, the trash and litter that strewed the once immaculate floors.

"Beasts!" he cried. "Beasts! Lower than beasts! Is this the life you lead night after night? Is this what you call life, what you call enjoyment? Beasts! Beasts! Beasts!"

No one answered. No one took the slightest notice of him. Cut-throats such as these were common at Frenchy's in the wee small hours. The waiters were used to them and did not heed. The guests were too drunk to heed. John looked about him and realized the truth. With a sudden gesture of disgust he flung down his wine-glass, streaking the table-cloth with the rich red juice of bygone summers.

Disgustedly he strode to the door; but as he reached it a woman—Teresa—met and stopped him.

"Signor," she said, and looked him in the face with heavy-lidded, passionate, yet weary eyes. "Signor! All night have I danced for you and you have not-a heed. All night have I wait that you throw me one look, one word, and you throw it not. And now you go. Is it not so, signor? Is it that you have nothing to say to me first?"

John did not understand the real purport of the girl's speech; but he did understand that she thought that he was Leroy and that she spoke to him as such. He saw, too, that she was beautiful and that she was not drunk, and his heart leaped. All night he had seen only the sodden side of this life that had seemed to him so splendid from afar; all night he had sought for its romance, and had found it not. Now a sudden hope seized him. Was he to find its other side now, at the last moment?

Gaily he spoke.

"What should I say to you, signorina?" he questioned.

The girl started backward and flung up her head. Her distended eyes blazed.

"What should-a you say to me?" she echoed. "What should-a you say? You who have ruin me, have degrade me! What should-a you say?" Her voice was rising, rising.

With a sudden recurrence of his old shyness, John strove to quiet her.

"Not here," he begged. "Not here. Let us go outside and talk. It is too hot here, too sickening. Come."

Some alien note in his voice did what his features had not been able to do. The girl started back and stared at him incredulously. Then the look of perplexity faded and one of cunning and deferred vengeance took its place.

"Si, si, signor!" she hissed. "Si; let us go to the outside. Si, let us go! Oh, not-a to that-a door; to this-a one. Si, let us go! Oh, but I have much to say-a to you. Much, much!"

Toward the big windows that opened by the telephones in the corridor she led him. Beside one of them she stopped and motioned him to pass through. As he did so, she followed; and as she came she waved her fan to two men who were sitting at the edge of the porch.

"Signor," she said, "you have come of your own will. Signor, I need money—much money. And you owe me much! Give it to me now."

John laughed. "And if I will not?" he asked.

Sudden fury flashed in the girl's eyes.

"Then I will take it, signor!" she hissed.

Something in the savage triumph that rang in the girl's voice, or some sixth sense inherited from ancestors who had fought for their lives, not once, but many times, against stealthy foes, warned John that death was

upon him. Swiftly, far more swiftly than he would have believed possible an hour before, he swung around to meet it face to face.

Knives in hand, the two Italians were springing toward him. Death was in their looks. He had no time for parley, no time for explanations, no time for anything but action. Hesitation for a single moment, for the space of a single eye-flick, would mean that he would hesitate no more forever.

He did not hesitate. Into his mind flashed Leroy's fanciful description of the manner in which he had saved himself the night before from just such an attack. John did not suspect that the tale was fanciful—that it was a lie from the whole cloth. If he had suspected it his life would have probably ended then and there, for suspicion would have spelled delay. To him it was still truth, and he acted upon it.

Like a leaping tiger he sprang toward Guiseppe, who was on the right. As he did so, Guiseppe struck, just as Leroy had pictured him. Easily and deftly John caught his wrist, spun him clear around, himself following, and drove wrist, knife, and, all hard against Iago's back and side. Then, with a sudden wrench, he twisted Guiseppe's wrist till he screamed and let his knife clatter to the floor.

Then lightly he sprang back.

"Now, perhaps you will listen to me, you fools!" he cried.

The two men did not answer. Dumb with surprise and sick with pain, they staggered back and stood clutching—the one his pierced arm, the other his wrenched wrist.

But Teresa answered. Amazement and delight blazed in her eyes. Swiftly she sprang to John's side and shook her fist at her brothers.

"Fools! Liars!" she cried. "You have say that he is one coward—one bluffer. You are fools! He is-a one man!" She swung to John. "Signor," she cried, "I think you are a coward. I am wrong. These, my brothers, shall trouble you no more. You are one man, and they shall trouble you no more. Marriage? What care I for marriage? With or without, I go with you, signor."

John dodged again—this time an embrace. He was enjoying the adventure hugely. It was the first adventure he had had in all his life and he was delighted with it; but he considered that it had gone far enough. Teresa was pretty, and, man-like, he would have been glad enough to embrace her; but he remembered, as Leroy never did, that there was a to-morrow. Adventure was all very well in its way, but there was a to-morrow, for he was sure of that.

So he dodged.

"One moment, signorita," he begged. "One little moment. Much as I long for it, you shall not give to me what belongs to another." The words came mellifluously to John's lips. He was doing famously; silently he commended himself. "I am not Leroy Scott. I am his cousin, John Scott. You"—he turned to the two men—"you saw me to-night when the officers brought you to my library for Leroy to identify. I have changed my clothes since then and have shaved off my mustache. But I am not Leroy."

Passionately, with eyes distended, the girl listened, glaring.

"It—it is not-a true!" she screeched. "It is not-a true. You are Leroy! You are my true lover! You are——"

"Peace!" Raspingly Guiseppe broke in. He had seen John and Leroy together, as Teresa had not, and he had noticed the likeness between them. Moreover he had heard voices. John's measured tones, when he used them—and he used them now—were not to be confounded with Leroy's staccato accents. Guiseppe could hear and discriminate. Further, he was perhaps glad to hand back to Teresa some of the taunts she had heaped upon him. "Peace!" he rasped in Italian. "The man speaks true. He is not Leroy, but John. And you are a fool."

Teresa had already realized the fact. In her heart of hearts she had realized it before Guiseppe had broken in. For an instant wounded pride rather than conviction prevented her from yielding. Then all at once she did so. Miserably she dropped her eyes and tottered back.

John turned to her.

"I'm sorry," he said; "I am, really. I'd like to do something to show that I am sorry. If you and your brothers will all come to my house to-morrow I'll see if I can't find some way to help you all. I hope"—he turned on Iago—"I hope I didn't hurt you very badly just now. Was it in the same place where Leroy cut you last night?"

"Leroy?" Iago stared.

"Yes; he taught me that trick. He said he used it on you last night."

"Leroy have-a lied. Leroy he do nothing but run like one cur dog last night. Leroy is one big coward."

"Oh!" John's face fell.

Leroy's pedestal had been crumbling all evening. Now, Leroy himself began to crumble. Iago's words rang true. Still, he might be lying.

"Oh, well," he said pacifically, "come to the house and let me see what I can do for you. You will come, won't you?"

Iago shook his head. He was hot-headed, ready to use his knife on small provocation, or none at all; but he bore no malice. Besides, he had discovered that his wound was not deep; but he shook his head nevertheless. He knew that he could not come to the house on the next day, or on any other day. If Crook appeared—he had not appeared yet—he would soon be far away; if Crook did not appear he would be in jail. Dumbly he looked at Guiseppe, who was by far the readier speaker.

That knife artist shrugged his shoulders.

"We cannot come," he said. "We thank-a the signor; but we cannot come. We must fly quick. That was why Teresa ask you for money. We wait here for it. If it does not come, we will be ruin. Else we would not ask Leroy for money. We do not sell our sister; but if the signor really wish-a to help he will give us money now."

"Money? Sure!" John drew out his sadly depleted roll. "How much?" He peeled off half a dozen bills. "Will that be enough? But what have you got to run for? Don't tell me unless you like."

Guiseppe shrugged his shoulders. He had taken the money and was stowing it away with the look of a man suddenly rescued from destruction.

"I tell you," he said, "it makes no difference now. All the people know to-morrow—yes. We must run because we have pass the counterfeits, the same as Signor Leroy."

"Leroy?" John's eyes grew suddenly startled. This was too much. "Leroy! Do you mean——"

"Sure; he pass-a de money fine. He pass-a three four times more as we—yes! To-night the Secret Service find out and we all run. We thank you ver' much for the money. *Buona notte*, signor." With a nod he turned away.

"Hold on!" Horrified as he was, John was stanch. Even if Leroy had really been passing counterfeits he must try to save him. But he must first know more. Perhaps he could help him best by helping these accomplices—these probable witnesses—to escape. "Wait till I get my hat and coat," he said, "and I'll take you to the nearest railroad station."

Without waiting for an answer he turned back into the dining-hall.

Just inside the door he noticed Jarvis coming toward him.

CHAPTER EIGHT

HELEN MERTON and her maid had waited long in the vestry at the Little Church, while Jarvis patroled the sidewalk outside and watched and waited for Leroy.

The first stages of the elopement passed without a hitch. Jarvis had simply gone to the Merton house, had waved his handkerchief at Helen's window from across the street, and Helen and the maid had come out of the front door and had gone away with him. At the corner they had gotten into a waiting taxi, and had sped away to the Little Church.

Finding that Leroy had not yet arrived, Helen had explained matters to the assistant rector, who was always ready for such affairs, and had sat down to wait.

But as time sped on and Leroy did not come, Helen grew anxious. Resentment against her father's hasty and ill-chosen words, coupled with a strong admiration and a real liking for Leroy and his romantic ways, had carried her from the house and brought her to the church; but in the semigloom of the silent edifice she had time to think and to repent. Her maid's ill-disguised horror, too, did not tend to exhilarate her, and Leroy's delay was worst of all.

No thought that he might have jilted her and did not mean to come crossed her mind; but excuses for delay at one's own wedding are never acceptable to either bride or groom. Moreover, after a time Helen began to fear that something serious had happened to detain him.

If she could have gone home she would have done so. But she could not—at least, not without intense humiliation. Not only did the maid know—and the maid would talk, Helen knew it—but she had locked the door behind her and could not get back into the house except by ringing. There was no possible way to conceal her adventure. Her father, the whole household, and the whole circle of her friends would know that she had eloped and had been jilted at the altar; and they would believe even worse things. Well Helen knew how the poisoned tongue of scandal would batten on her. Oh, it was not to be borne! Leroy must come! Her only salvation lay in his coming.

Jarvis, too, was troubled. He knew Leroy's plans and knew that long delay had no place in them. He remembered the two Italians. Leroy had apparently given them the slip. Perhaps they had picked up the trail again. Who knew? Desperate at last, he sought the nearest saloon and called up the Scott house. Again and again Central rang for him; but no one would answer. Then, by a sudden hope, he called up Frenchy's.

"Hello," he called. "This is Jarvis speaking—Mr. Leroy Scott's man. Is Mr. Scott there, by any chance?"

The man at the other end laughed.

"Is he here?" he answered. "Is he here? Well, you're whistling he's here. He's raising hades, too. Say, I've seen Mr. Leroy raise Ned, but I never saw him doin' it quite so vigorous before. He's crazy wild."

Jarvis gasped. He had called up the roadhouse chiefly with the expectation of eliminating it from the list of possible places and not with the least idea of locating his master there. To find him, especially in the condition that the waiter described, was incredible.

"Oh, I sye," he exclaimed, reverting to his usually forgotten or suppressed Cockney dialect. "Oh, I sye. What yer giving me?"

"Ain't givin' you nothin'. You asked for Mr. Leroy, didn't you?"

"Yes."

"Well, I told you he's here. Come and see for yourself if you don't believe me."

Jarvis heard the telephone click as the man slammed the receiver on the hook.

Slowly the valet walked out of the saloon and back to the church. Clearly something must be done. But what? Perhaps he had really better go to Frenchy's and find out for himself. He was beginning to feel very indignant. Jarvis had trained himself to look up to his employer as a sort of tin god; but he also had trained himself to consider ladies, and he knew that Mr. Leroy was doing wrong. This was no way to treat a lady.

As he neared the church he quickened his steps and went in. To Helen he reported nothing of what he had learned.

"Perhaps you'd like for me to go and see if I can find Mr. Leroy, ma'am," he said. "I'll be very glad to try if you think it best, ma'am."

Helen nodded miserably.

"Yes, go," she said, "and when you find him tell him to hurry. I won't wait much longer."

She stopped with a gasp. It was unbearable that the servants should witness her degradation.

Jarvis went; but it took a good while to get to Frenchy's.

And meanwhile events were shaping themselves. For Leroy the mills of the gods were grinding fast.

Maxwell and Collins had wasted little time in an effort to find Crook and his companions near the scene of their disappearance. Both knew that it would be useless to seek for any one in that warren of humanity. The search must be made on broader lines.

Collins took the first step. He rushed to the nearest telephone and called up the police station and reported the facts. Instantly the sergeant passed them on and on and on till the detectives and patrolmen over the

whole city knew that Crook and the two Italians were wanted, and wanted badly. Stool-pigeons—men seemingly and often actually rogues, who nevertheless acted as spies for the police—were notified as quickly as might be of the quest. Officers at the ferries and railway stations were warned. Unless the fugitives got away before the net was completely spread, or unless they were unusually clever the chances for them to escape were slight.

All this, however, took time. It was not till late that Maxwell and Collins got back to the police station from which they had started out so abruptly; and there they found a tip awaiting them.

The sergeant had had time to think and had evolved a conclusion.

"Look here, Maxwell," he called as soon as the Secret Service officer came in; "and you, Collins, come here. You think Leroy Scott could be mixed up in this?"

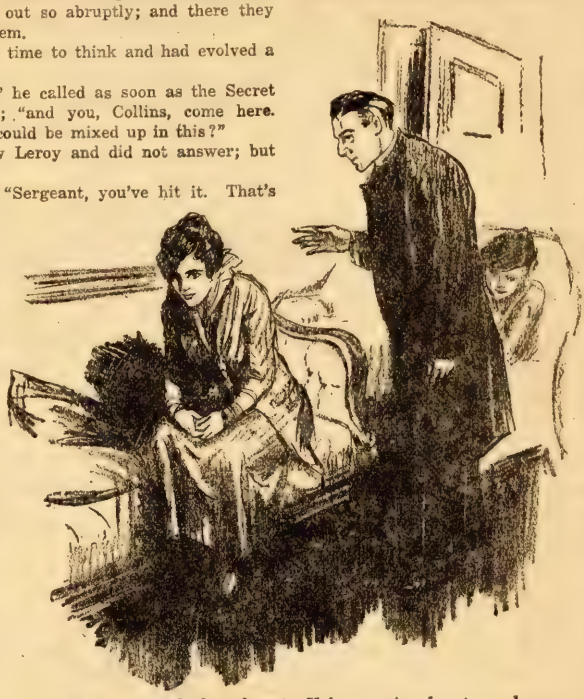
Maxwell did not know Leroy and did not answer; but Collins jumped.

"By God!" he cried. "Sergeant, you've hit it. That's why he lied about those dagos. He was afraid of them. There isn't any doubt about that. He wanted them to be jailed; and yet he lied them free. He wouldn't have done it unless he had a mighty good reason."

"That's the way that I doped it out. He's in on the game, or else they've got something on him that ain't come out yet. Where'll he be right now?"

Collins did not hesitate.

"He'll be out at Frenchy's roadhouse," he said positively. "He's there about six nights in the week; and, by thunder! that's where that girl Teresa, the sister of those dagos—Guiseppe and Iago—dances."



Many times he had spoken to Helen, urging her to go home

"Good! Hop out there, quick. See if he's paid in any money to-night and see if they can pick it out for you." The sergeant turned to Maxwell. "Go along, Mr. Maxwell, will you, and look at the money and see if it's bogus. If it is, Collins will nail Leroy and bring him here. Bring him anyway, Collins. We'll give him the third degree before he has time to get ready for it. Hop to it."

Collins hopped; but Jarvis was well ahead of him. Long before the officers reached Frenchy's, Jarvis had entered the dining-room at Frenchy's.

And there he met John coming from the porch.

He did not know it was John. He thought it was Leroy. Valet-like, he noticed that the man coming toward him wore clothes different from those he had last had on; but he noticed nothing more. Probably his haste blinded him, or perhaps he was used to seeing Leroy look different in the early morning.

No thought of recognition troubled John. He took it for granted that Jarvis would know him; but he did not care. Recognition was a very minor evil compared with the other troubles he faced. Gladly he welcomed the chance to consult with Jarvis. Swiftly he went to meet him. But Jarvis was the first to break the silence.

"Miss Merton is waiting at the Little Church, sir," he panted. "She's very much excited, sir. If I may be allowed to say it, sir, it's no way to treat a lady-born, sir."

"What?" John's face grew livid. "What do you mean? Miss Merton at the Little Church! Good God, man! What do you mean?"

Jarvis stared, then he started back in amazement. Whether by John's voice or face or manner, or by all three, he guessed the truth. "Mr. John!" he gasped.

"Yes; I'm John. Where's Leroy? And what do you mean by saying that Miss Merton is at the Little Church? Damn you, man, speak!"

Heedless of the sleepy guests at the other tables, he grabbed the valet by the shoulder and shook him. His underlying resemblance to Leroy came to the surface now unmistakably. It frightened Jarvis. The valet was not particularly courageous and his cultivated faithfulness to his employer yielded to stress. Besides, even though only a valet, he had his standards, and he felt indignant at Leroy's abandonment of the girl.

"Yes, sir! Yes, sir!" he babbled. "I'll tell you all, sir I'll explain. It's this way, sir."

Swiftly he poured out the story of the night, so far as he knew it. John, remembering the telephone-call from Crook, and its warning, and remembering, too, the information that he had just received from the two Italians, guessed the rest.

"Leroy did this? Leroy?" he gasped. "Oh, the scoundrel! The infernal scoundrel!"

Hotly his heart burned within him. The coop was filled to overflowing. John could have condoned Leroy's coun-

terfeiting. He could have made allowance for his treatment of Teresa, who after all seemed little better than she should be. He could have pardoned his long deceit. He could even have set aside his own shattered ideals of the man he had so long admired. But Leroy's treatment of Helen he could not forgive.

His lips moved and he spoke, not knowing that he did speak.

"He's not the better man," he muttered. "He's not! He's a liar, a coward and a thief, and he shan't have her!"

Like a leaf he flung the valet aside and rushed toward the exit.

As he burst out, the police came up, Collins in the lead. They saw him, thought they recognized him, and sprang to seize him.

But John was not to be easily seized—not that night. He had tasted of the joys of combat once, and he was ready to taste them again. Besides, he had no time to waste in parley. Helen needed him, and he must get to her—at all costs he must get to her. He did not pause; he did not turn and run. Straight forward, furious as a mad bull, he charged, bucking the line of police as a football player bucks the line. Through it and straight away across the gravel he went.

An automobile—it was the one that had brought Jarvis, though John did not know that—was waiting, with throbbing engine. The chauffeur, standing a few feet away, with his back turned for shelter from the soughing wind, was lighting a cigarette. John did not heed him. Into the car he leaped, flung over the levers, and sped quickly away.

He had forgotten the Italians; but they had not forgotten him. Undoubtedly they had seen the police and had guessed something of the truth. As the car gathered way they ran forward, clutched at its rear, and clung there.

Behind arose a wild riot of shouts and challenges, punctuated by the sharp staccato of pistols. John heard them, but did not heed. He was in the open, running like a hare. The consciousness of power was in him; it mounted to him from the whirring wheels, the throbbing engine. Nothing should stop him now. On, on he went!

CHAPTER NINE

LOW burned the lights in the church. Still, and ever stiller, grew the night. Helen's maid, crouched in the corner of the vestry, slept uneasily. The curate, watching and waiting, frowned in troubled fashion, perplexed as to his duty. Not once but many times he had spoken to Helen, urging her to go home, and each time she had begged for grace—for a little longer grace.

Gladly would she have gone home if she could; but the door of escape was closed. Miserable, heart-broken, desperate, with white fingers locked into each other, she waited—waited for the man she had come almost to hate, but on whom hung her only hope for regeneration.

Abruptly the telephone on the wall tinkled, and she sprang to it, ignoring the curate, who had also started up.

"Yes, yes, yes!" she cried as she recognized Jarvis' voice. "Yes, yes! This is Miss Merton. What is it? Oh, what is it?"

Jarvis explained. He could not explain everything, for he did not know everything; but he told what he could.

Helen, on the other hand, could not understand all that he did say. His excitement and hers and the inadequacies of the telephone blurred the story; but she did grasp the fact that some one—Leroy, she supposed—had fought the police, seized a car, and was speeding toward her. With a long sigh she fainted.

Ten minutes later, revived by the curate and by the maid, she sat up, then rose dizzily to her feet, pushing aside the others, who strove to make her rest.

"He's coming," she cried; "he's coming, I tell you. I must meet him. Oh, for God's sake, let me go. I must see him!"

Past the two she thrust and staggered toward the door of the church; but even before she reached it the gods were grinding out the last of their grist.

John had arrived. Madly driven, his car reached the curb and he sprang from the steering-wheel. He did not stop to look at the car, still less to look behind it. The two Italians, who had clung on through all the wild ride, might not have been there for all he knew or cared. His only thought was to get to Helen.

But as he hurried toward the gates of the tiny churchyard another man, hurrying from the opposite direction, met him face to face.

It was Leroy. For an hour that dashing "sport"—not so dashing now—had raced from station to station, from ferry to ferry, only to shrink back when he saw at each, close by the gate, a policeman, who, to his guilty soul, seemed to scrutinize narrowly every one who approached it. He could have taken the elevated train or an automobile and have fled into the country, but he knew—or guessed—that every railway station that he could reach by that means would also be guarded. Leroy had had no experience in the science of evading the police. Besides, terror befogged his wits.

Cut off from escape, his thoughts turned back to Helen and to her father. He had thought to spare her; but now it seemed neck or nothing. She offered his only hope. Once he was her husband her father would have to try to save him—save his son-in-law. Perhaps he could do it; certainly he would do something. In every other direction Leroy could see only destruction. His only hope was to marry Helen, at whatever cost to her. He fought against the idea; but at last he yielded and hurried toward the church; and at the entrance he faced John.

For a moment the two looked at each other silently. Leroy particularly glared in amazement; he knew nothing of John's masquerade, and it took him a few seconds to recognize his cousin and a few more to guess that he must have come to the church in some way at Helen's summons; but though it took time to understand the situation, he was nevertheless the first to speak.

True to his nature, he tried to bluff. Bluff, blow and brag had availed him for years past. Instinctively he relied on them.

"Why, hello, John!" he cried. "Glad to see you, old man. Did you come to act as best man?"

Leroy tried to give his voice the old cheerful, hearty boom that had come so naturally to him a few hours

before. And in a measure he succeeded. A stranger might have been impressed with it.

But John knew the truth and was not to be deceived. The time for that had gone by. In spite of all, Leroy's old spell over him was still strong, but he resisted it. He grieved for Leroy's downfall; he would gladly help him escape the penalty of his sins and crimes; but beyond this he would do nothing. Leroy's words made it certain that he had come to the church to marry Helen, despite all that had happened; and against this John's mind stood inflexible. No longer did he think Leroy the best man; too well he knew that he was the worst man, and very strongly he believed that he was even the lesser man; and he was resolved that he should not have Helen.

So he faced his cousin.

"Yes," he said; "I came to be best man, but not best for you. I came to save Helen from you and from the danger in which you have placed her. Leroy, I know everything. I know you are a liar, a coward and a thief. The police are on your track. There is my car. Here"—he took out his pocketbook—"here is money. Take both of them and go. Don't go back to Frenchy's; the police are watching there. If you get to safety and need more money let me know. Now go!"

Leroy clutched the money. Irresolutely he looked at the car, then at the church.

"Is Helen——" he began.

"I will take care of Helen. Go!"

"But——"

"Go!"

Leroy cringed. "Can't I see her to say good-by?" he begged. "I didn't mean to subject her to this humiliation. I didn't know what was coming. I didn't dream——"

"Go!" John's temper flared up. He was in no mood for mildness—not that night. One stride took him to Leroy's side. "Go!" he thundered. "Go, or by——"

He did not finish; he did not need to finish. His distorted face spoke his meaning.

And Leroy went.

John did not stop to watch him. He did not even glance after him. Swift-footed, wild to find Helen and end the suspense he knew she must be suffering, he ran up the steps into the church. Even before Leroy had reached the waiting car he had disappeared inside the portals. He did not see the two Italians slip from behind the car and hurry soft-footed toward Leroy as he stopped to open the door of the car. He did not hear Leroy's choked cry of terror that ended in a moan. If he heard the rumble of the automobile he thought it carried Leroy, and not Teresa's avengers.

All his thoughts were of Helen. Somehow he must get her back to her own home before daylight should expose her to the scorn of her friends; somehow he must save her; somehow—oh, somehow—he must make things come right for her.

Up the shadowy aisle toward the dim altar he sped, looking, looking. He saw the light that streamed from the vestry, and turned toward it; and in its doorway he saw Helen.

And Helen saw him and stretched out her arms to him.

"Oh, you've come!" she cried. "You've come at last! Oh, thank God! Thank God!"

John took her hands and stared at her. He did not speak. He could not speak. He understood that Helen, like all the rest, supposed him to be Leroy, and welcomed him because she thought he was Leroy. Choking, heart-broken by the realization, he stood speechless.

Then abruptly temptation gripped him. Helen thought he was Leroy! Why should she not continue to think so? Why should she not marry him as Leroy? The clergyman was waiting. John could see his white gown and bands in the semilight. Why should he not take what the gods had sent? Why should he not marry Helen then and there? It would solve the problem of saving her. Afterwards—— But John was past caring for what happened afterwards.

Abruptly his hands closed tighter in Helen's, and now he spoke in a voice that had the very timbre of Leroy's.

"Come," he said, "the rector is waiting."

Irresistibly he drew her toward the altar.

For a moment Helen held back, staring at him strangely.

John felt the resistance, slight though it was, and tightened his hold.

"Come!" he ordered. "Come!"

And Helen came. The scared maid followed.

Before the high altar they faced the clergyman, who stood waiting with open book.

Then at the last moment John quailed. Miserably he dropped Helen's hands.

"I can't do it," he cried. "I'm a coward and a quitter; but I can't do it. I'd give my life to win you, Helen, but I can't do it this way. I'm not Leroy, Helen. I'm John."

Miserably he waited for the answer that would blast him.

It came, but not as he expected. Gladly, happily, but tremulously, with a tremulousness that showed that tears lay very near the surface, Helen's laughter bubbled out.

"Did you think I didn't know it, John?" she marveled. "Did you think—— Oh, John, John! Didn't you know it was you I loved all the time?"

THE END

Miss Merton laid down the manuscript and drew a long breath. Then she picked it up and read on again. Apparently "The End" was not the real end. She read:

"DEAR HELEN—This is the story that you asked me to write—not the one I had begun, but another that I began after I left you. I started it with the actual events of the afternoon; and then I 'cut the string and soared.' It is all fiction, dear—all but the one fact that I love you. That is always and forever true.

"I send it to you in the fear that you will hate me for what I have written and in hope that nevertheless you may read in it what I have never dared to tell you with my lips.

"You asked me to make you the heroine, and I did. You asked me to make myself the hero, and I did. But I'm afraid that I shall ever be the weakling of the early chapters and never the man of the later ones. I had to have a villain, and I chose Mr. Leroy because of his booming ways and because I owed him one for coming in with his wife and breaking up our tête-à-tête yesterday afternoon. Poor man! How horror-stricken he would be if he knew the things I made him do. "Oh, yes; of course I had to make him my cousin to account for the

marvelous likeness that had to exist between us; perhaps if I had a real cousin I should have used him, but as I had none, Poor Leroy had to figure. For my slanderous handling of your father I can only apologize. For heaven's sake, don't let him know about it.

"By the way, is there such a place as Frenchy's? It seems to me I have seen it mentioned in the police reports. And does the assistant rector at the Little Church stay on duty all night? I doubt it; but—well, he had to do it, whether or no. Poor man, I shall try to make it up to him when—if——

"Oh, Helen, Helen! I love you so! Can't you love me, too, dear? The telephone must be at your hand, and I shall be hanging on mine. Can't you call me up and——" Abruptly the letter ended.

For a moment Helen looked at the written words, flushing and smiling. Then a mischievous look crinkled her brows and sparkled in her eyes. Gently she lifted the receiver and gave a number.

"Is that you, John?" she asked. "Yes, I'm Helen. I wanted to say—— Wait a moment till I find the place." She drew the manuscript toward her and turned back to the last page of the story. "Oh, yes; here it is: 'Did you think I didn't know it, John?'" she read. "'Did you think—— Oh, John, John! Didn't you know it was you I loved all the time?'"

A NEGLECTED VEGETABLE

THE Jerusalem artichoke deserves to be much better known in this country, which is its native land, for it is one of the favorite vegetables in all parts of Europe, it is easy to grow, and a most valuable article of food for man and beast. Prof. T. D. A. Cockerell of the University of Colorado extols its merits in the *Scientific Monthly* and tells some most interesting facts about it, the while saying it is neglected as a vegetable in America.

Its name is a curiosity of etymology. The word "artichoke" is derived from the Moorish "alkharshof," which was applied to the true, or globe artichoke, of which we eat the flower-head with its thickened bracts and the delicate "bottom." This plant, which is of the thistle family, is a native of the Old World. The Jerusalem artichoke, Helianthus tuberosus, is a tuber which grows on the roots of a sunflower. It was well known and much used by the natives of America before the coming of Columbus. It was introduced into France early in the seventeenth century and was grown in the Farnese Gardens in Rome, whence it was distributed throughout Europe under the name of Girasole Articiocco, or sunflower artichoke. "The name artichoke," writes Prof. Cockerell, "appears to have been given to the Helianthus solely on account of the more or less similar flavor, while 'Jerusalem' is an English corruption of the Italian 'Girasole,' or sunflower."

THE FIRST BATHTUB

LIKE most new things, the bathtub had to fight its way to public favor. America's first was installed in 1842 and aroused a violent controversy, its use being attacked by aroused a violent controversy, its use being attacked by doctors, the press and even by lawmaking bodies. Only two votes defeated an ordinance in the Philadelphia Common Council to prohibit bathing between November 1 and March 15; Virginia put a tax of $30 a year on tubs, while in 1845 Boston made bathing unlawful except on medical advice.

Adam Thompson installed our first bathtub in his Cincinnati home. On business trips to England, he had become familiar with the novelty, introduced there by Lord John Russell in 1828 and taken up by a band of enthusiasts. The English tub, merely an overgrown dishpan, did not suit Thompson's fancy, so he designed one of mahogany, lined with sheet lead. For water supply a tank was installed in the attic of his home, the hot-water pipe being coiled inside the kitchen chimney. On December 20, 1842, he took two baths, and on Christmas Day exhibited the innovation to a dinner party. Four guests, including Col. Duchanel, a French visitor, risked a plunge.

It was the sensation of Cincinnati next day. People wrote to the papers that our American democracy was becoming effete and some doctors predicted rheumatism and inflammation of the lungs for those who bathed in winter.

A Brooklyn plumber, John F. Simpson, produced the zinc tub, but could not secure a patent on it. The first New York bath-tub was put in use on September 12, 1847.

THE HORSE'S DAY WANING

THE earliest known ancestor of the horse, called the Eohippus or "Dawn Horse," is believed to have existed more than three million years ago, in what is known as the Eocene Age, hundreds of thousands of years before the coming of man. Fossil remains of that animal were found in certain rock strata in this country.

This earliest known ancestor of the horse was about the size of a small fox, standing a little more than fourteen inches high at the shoulder. He had four toes on each of his front feet and three-toed hind feet. His teeth were small and short-crowned. He probably lived around the margins of lakes, where the ground was more or less soggy, and pastured on grass.

In the course of thousands of centuries, his physique developed as his needs required. His size increased as his skeleton underwent important changes in accordance with his altered living conditions and habits.

The horse of the Oligocene period, known as Mesohippus, was about the size of a sheep and had three toes on each foot. In the Miocene, a little later period, there were numerous large horses, all with three toes on each foot, but with the middle toe much larger than its companions. Their teeth were much longer, more powerful and much deeper-crowned.

In a still later period, called the Pliocene, were found the first horses with but a single toe on each hoof. The auxiliary toes, being useless, disappeared, and only the stumps remained, traces of which may be seen in modern horses.

True horses, of the form and approximate size of the modern steed, were not found until the Pleistocene period. These were common all over North America and Europe. Although they resembled the modern horse, they were smaller in size, and inferior in strength and fleetness.

THREE OF A KIND

By CHARLES E. LAMBERT

I.

THERE never was such an insistent little call-bell as that in the private sanctum of the General Manager of the C. & A. It kept ringing from morning till night, and when it rang with unusual violence on a certain August afternoon while every one in Chicago was sweltering, the thermometer having been now three days up in the nineties, it attracted but faint attention among the clerks.

Possibly a few observed that the slim, quiet-looking man, who had been for some moments waiting, was summoned to the office.

But it was no uncommon thing for a dozen men to be waiting on the high and mighty official, who was ever inaccessible save to those whom he chose to see.

"Sit down, sir," said the manager. "This is Mr. Martin Rush, I believe."

"That is my name," replied the quiet man, dropping into the chair which stood beside the manager's desk. "You sent for me and I am here. Please explain why."

"Mr. Rush," said the manager, lowering his voice, "the C. & A. is in trouble and needs the services of the most skilful detective that money can secure. At the suggestion of Mr. Pinkerton I have sent for you. I am aware that you operate entirely on your own responsibility and have been successful in many intricate and difficult cases. What are your present engagements? Would you be willing to undertake a case for us, or rather for the express company for whom I am empowered to act?"

The face which looked at the manager was as unexpressive as a block of wood.

"Although you said nothing about it in your letter," Rush replied, "I presume you refer to the mysterious express car robberies which have recently occurred on the C. & A."

And the detective's jaws opened and shut with a snap as he uttered the words.

The manager started. "How is it possible that you can know of these robberies?" he exclaimed. "The Alton road has taken the greatest of pains to keep them out of the papers, and I believed had been successful in so doing. It is the same with the C., B. & Q. and the Northwestern, who have been served in the same way."

Instantly the lid of the coffin box was thrown off and a masked man sprang out.

"Of the business of the C., B. & Q. and the Northwestern, I have nothing to say," replied the detective, "but I am quite familiar with the Alton's connection with this matter. Let us read." Out came a notebook; the detective read as follows:

"June 10. St. Louis night express. Robbery discovered at Springfield. Safe blown, loss $6,333.94. Two large express packages missing. Messenger chloroformed. Could tell absolutely nothing about the robbery. Car found open upon the arrival of the train at Springfield. Messenger last seen by the conductor at Sherman."

"In heaven's name, who told you all this? The express company?" gasped the manager. "It has been a dead secret, and——"

"Wait! My time is valuable," interrupted the detective. "It was *not* the express company. You will never know who it was. Let me continue."

"June 18. Kansas City night express. Robbery discovered at Roadhouse. Safe blown. Messenger chloroformed. Loss, $7,382, besides diamonds of undetermined value. July 2. St. Louis express. Safe blown, messenger chloroformed. Loss, $11,946, two cases watches, one package bonds, a box of ancient coins, several large packages as before. July 19——"

"Stop!" interposed the manager. "You know it all. Some one will lose his head for this."

"Spare your efforts," replied the detective, pocketing his book. "You will never learn the source of my information. Now, then, do you want me to undertake this case?"

"Do you know—I mean, have you any clue to the mystery?"

"None whatever."

"But you——"

"Pardon me. My reputation as a detective is well known. I never waste words or time. We are wasting both now. Do you or do you not wish me to undertake this case?"

"Most assuredly I do."

"I will do it on one condition."

"Name it."

"That I be absolute in the matter—that you will act precisely as I order."

"I agree to that. As to the compensation——"

"Stop! If I succeed I will render you my bill like any other professional man. If I fail there will be no charge."

"But I should prefer——"

"Those are my terms, and they are final," said Martin Rush, rising.

"I accept them!" replied the manager hastily. "What are your orders? What am I to do?"

The detective's reply was prompt.

"I shall try a bluff game," he said. "Arrange with Rosenthal & Co., the State street diamond dealers, to ship a package of diamonds to Kansas City by the night express this day week. The package need not actually contain diamonds, but let the fact that the shipment is to be made and the date be generally known."

"It shall be done," said the manager.

"When?"

"To-morrow I will act. It is too late to-day."

"Very good. If you will take the trouble to examine the morning papers day after to-morrow, you will find that they have all noticed the fact that Rosenthal & Co. are about to ship these goods. I think there is nothing further to be said, except to remind you that success may not come on the first trial. Good-day."

Whereupon, Detective Rush turned and abruptly left the office, leaving the manager in doubt as to whether or no he had made a huge blunder in engaging the services of so peculiar a man.

II.

The reputation of Martin Rush as a private detective of consummate skill was too well known in Chicago, and indeed throughout the West, for the manager of the C. & A. to seriously contemplate any change in the arrangement entered into, however much his personal pride might have been ruffled by the abrupt manner of the man.

The robberies were, indeed, a most serious affair.

Believing it to be for their interest to conceal them from the public, the three roads involved had promptly settled their losses, and thus kept the matter out of the papers.

Several detectives had been employed, but all had failed to gain the slightest clue to the mystery.

There could be no doubt, however, that in each instance the robberies had been the work of the same persons.

Even the great Pinkerton had given it up and as a last resort recommended the engagement of Martin Rush.

Upon leaving the manager's office the detective returned to his own, which was at that time located in the Metropolitan Block at the corner of Randolph and La Salle streets.

"There's a lady in No. 1 who wishes to see you, sir," said the gray-haired man, who was his sole assistant; "and that young man is back again. He is in No. 2."

Now attached to the general office of the detective were two smaller ones, so arranged that no word spoken in either could possibly penetrate to the other or to the office where the assistant usually sat.

These were designated by the numbers 1 and 2.

Passing the door of No. 1 the detective entered No. 2.

"Ah! Caryl Dorne again," he said, as a pleasant-faced young man rose to greet him. "Have you learned anything? I confess I have been too busy even to think of your case."

"Nothing of any importance," was the reply, "unless it is this. Herbert Wardman last week sold to the New York diamond house of Reinhart & Co. a package of unset stones of considerable value. This I know to be a fact, for a friend of mine happened to be present and witnessed the transaction. If Wardman is the crook I believe him to be, it might be interesting to look into the matter and see how he came by the diamonds. Anyhow, I thought you ought to know."

"Wait," said the detective. "I would like to talk with you further about this. I will see you in a moment."

He then left No. 2 and passed into No. 1.

A young and exceedingly attractive girl awaited him.

As the detective glanced at her he thought he had never seen a more beautiful face.

But his jaws snapped in their usual style when he abruptly asked:

"What is it you wish?"

"You are Mr. Rush, the detective?" asked the girl, blushing faintly.

"Yes."

"I wish to consult you on——"

"Your name?"

"Must I give it?"

"If you wish to consult me you must."

"Helen Blywick."

"Daughter of the late Richard Blywick, the millionaire?"

"Yes, sir."

"Exactly."

"I hardly know how to begin my story, sir," said the girl, dropping her eyes. "The fact is I am about to be married to a man whom I loath and despise, and——"

"Stop!" interrupted the detective, and the jaws gave another unusually vicious snap. "Let me tell you your story, miss."

"Sir!"

"Wait. The man you are about to marry is Herbert Wardman, son of an old friend of your father's; clubman, racetrack man, gambler and, as you would like to believe, an accomplished all-around crook."

The girl's eyes opened to their fullest extent."

"Prove the last assertion," she said, with fierce earnestness. "Prove it and name your own reward. My father's will——"

"Your father's will," snapped the detective, taking the words out of her mouth, "requires you to marry this man or forfeit the entire estate to certain charitable institutions, unless it can be conclusively shown that Wardman has committed crime. No other option is given you, and while you do not love the man, this marriage is all the more distasteful to you for the reason that you *do* love another, a young man as poor in this world's goods as he is in your eyes—and actually so no doubt—possessed of every virtue. You would have me prove Wardman a

criminal that you may save your estate and marry the man of your heart, whose name is Caryl Dorne."

The girl's surprise was not to be mistaken.

"How can you have learned all this?" she asked in an agitated voice.

"It is true?"

"Every word of it."

"Have you any points to give me, that may lead to the discovery of the true character of Herbert Wardman?"

"No; I only wish I had. I have his photograph here, however; but perhaps you know the man?"

"Never laid eyes on him. Give me the photograph."

"You will undertake the case?" inquired Miss Blywick, as she produced it.

"I have already undertaken it," was the detective's ambiguous reply.

"Shall I give you a retainer?"

"Not a cent. Good-day, miss," and the detective bowed his fair client out.

"You are sure, of course, that the party in No. 2 has no suspicion of this young lady's presence here, Mr. Jarvis?" he inquired of his assistant.

"Certainly not," was the reply. "I understand my business too well, Mr. Rush, not to look out for that."

"I should hope so," snapped the detective, and he returned to No. 2, again confronting Caryl Dorne.

"When can you start for New York?" he asked abruptly.

"By the next train, if necessary," was the prompt response.

"Go. Obtain full particulars about this diamond sale. I don't, as a rule, touch cases like this, but let me give you a piece of advice. Don't let that young lady, of whom you have been telling me, slip through your fingers. You have deceived her, and you have attempted to deceive me. You are not the poor clerk you pretend to be. The liberal reward which you have promised will not come from a rich friend, as you have stated, but out of your own pocket. Allow me to tell you, Mr. Dorne, that I am perfectly familiar with the fact that you are the son of a Baltimore millionaire."

Caryl Dorne started.

He did not know that Helen Blywick had been prompted to precisely the same course of action as himself to clear the way for their marriage, for as yet the young man had not ventured to openly declare his love, knowing perfectly the delicate position in which Helen was placed.

"You seem to know everything," he exclaimed. "No one else in Chicago dreams of this. I wanted to be loved for myself, not for my prospective fortune, and——"

"Good-day, Mr. Dorne," interrupted the detective. "If you don't hurry you will miss your train."

III

"Now, I wonder," mused Martin Rush, as he sat in No. 2 one afternoon, a week later, studying a letter just received from Caryl Dorne containing certain very definite statements strongly reflecting upon the character of Herbert Wardman, "if there can be any connection between this diamond sale and the railroad robberies? It scarcely seems possible, and yet I have very positive information that the fortune left Wardman by his father was squandered to the last nickel three years ago. How has the man been able to maintain his expensive establishment since that time? For a while he was heavily in debt, but he has recently paid off everything and spends money more freely than ever. A sweet girl that, and I'd like to help her if I could—perhaps I can. To-night may tell."

That night Martin Rush entered the express car of the C. & A., Kansas City train, and presented an order from the general manager to be allowed to ride.

"Good enough," said the messenger. "I s'pose you're a detective, and I'm blame glad to see you. I was wild to-day when Dick Runyan, my assistant, reported sick, and I thought I'd got to make the night run alone."

"What's the trouble?" asked the detective, ignoring the messenger's suggestion.

"Why, it's them blame robberies. I've been expecting every night it would come my turn, and now I've got diamonds in the safe and all Chicago knows it. Confound them State street brokers! I don't see what they wanted to call in the reporters for, and tell them that they were going to ship ten thousand dollars' worth of diamonds over to Kansas City to-night. But here I am talking about the robberies against orders. I shall lose my head if I don't hold my tongue."

But, in spite of his growling, Martin Rush found Ned Sanders, the messenger, an exceedingly pleasant fellow.

He showed no further curiosity about the detective's business, although he could scarcely have questioned its nature.

And, unlike those who had preceded him on the case, Martin Rush did no questioning, but just smoked and chatted and made himself generally agreeable.

The train left Chicago at 6 p. m. in a pelting rainstorm. The first stop was Joliet, and by the time they reached it Ned and Martin Rush were excellent friends.

At Dwight the messenger got word that a stop would be made at Cayuga, to accommodate a funeral, and there was some pushing around of the express packages to make room for the box, as the car happened to be pretty well crowded that night.

When they pulled up at Cayuga and Ned opened the door, Rush was treated to rather a singular spectacle.

Three coffin boxes lay on the platform, and standing on either side of them were six respectable-looking men under umbrellas.

There were three hearses and four carriages, but what struck the detective as peculiar was the fact that each man carried a new, clean spade over his shoulder.

He inquired the meaning of this of the station agent while Ned was assisting the undertaker to put the boxes into the car.

"They belong to the coal miners' benevolent association over at Faberville," explained the agent; "the spade is their emblem; they always carry it at their funerals."

"Their friends, I suppose," said the detective, pointing to the boxes.

"Killed by fire-damp last week," said the agent. "They belong over in Mexico, Missouri. Two of 'em were brothers. It's a bad business; the mining company ought to be indicted for not giving their men better protection against that sort of thing than they do."

By this time the corpses were in the express car, the boxes being piled one on top of the other, for Ned declared he could not make room for them any other way.

As the train pulled out of Cayuga, Martin Rush saw the pallbearers, with their spades still over their shoulders, moving in solemn procession back to the carriages through the rain.

IV

"Blame the luck! I don't like having them corpses aboard for a cent!" growled Ned Sanders, as the train went pounding on toward Chenoa. "It makes me feel as though I was to be hoodooed. Three of a kind too! I'm gladder than ever that you are along."

The detective laughed.

"You're superstitious, my friend," he said. "But speaking of three of a kind, what do you say to a little game of cards? It will serve to while away the time."

"Don't object, though it's against the rules; but I s'pose you won't give a fellow away."

"Well, decidedly not."

"You don't look that kind. But say, what are you here for, anyhow? Are you a detective or not?"

"My business just now is to do a little bluffing," replied Rush, "but I won't begin by bluffing you on this. I am a detective—of course you know."

"I guessed it. What's your theory about these here robberies?"

"Haven't any. Never deal in 'em—only facts. Just now I'm waiting, and it looks very much as though I was going to keep on waiting all night. But here's a deck and we'll get down to business."

"We're so crowded here that one of us has got to sit back against them corpses," said New, "and just to prove to you that I ain't as superstitious as you may think after what I said, I'll do it."

Rush laughed and the play began on a ten-cent limit, for Ned declared that he never indulged in a stiffer game.

There was nothing to do at Pontiac, and detective and messenger were back at the cards as soon as the train pulled out, and with the ten-mile run to Chenoa before them, there was a fair prospect of several hands.

It was Martin Rush's deal and somehow he did it clumsily, dropping a card.

In stooping to pick it up he managed to drop another; at the same instant he heard Ned give a deep groan.

The detective straightened up in a hurry.

Ned's head had fallen back against the coffin boxes. He was deathly pale. His cards had dropped upon the board face upward.

"It's coming now!" thought the detective. "My bluff has worked," for a strange, sickly odor was perceptible through the car.

Rush looked here, there and everywhere, but could discover no one.

Then he bent over the unconscious man, his head coming in close contact with the uppermost one of the coffin boxes.

In a twinkling a hand was thrust out from beneath the box lid, and a saturated sponge pressed under the detective's nose.

Not a word came from Martin Rush—not even a groan.

His legs seemed to double under him, and he sank to the floor.

Instantly the lid of the coffin box was thrown off, and a masked man sprang out.

"It's all right! I've got 'em both!" he called out.

He seized the box and threw it aside, with an ease which showed it to be empty.

Up went the lid of the second box and out sprang another masked man.

Of course the third followed.

There were three of a kind now, with Martin Rush and the messenger at their mercy.

A little hand-bag, containing burglars' tools, was produced.

In a moment all three were bending over the safe, with their backs to their victims.

"Never done it easier," said the one who had held the sponge. "When I saw that fellow drop a card, I knew it was my chance. Hand me that wedge, Herb. I'll have the powder in place in a jiffy, and then it's diamonds for fair."

So satisfied were they of their perfect safety until the train should pull into Chenoa, that neither of the men thought it necessary to keep a watch behind.

One glance in that direction might have saved them and silenced Martin Rush forever, for at that instant the detective was stealing toward them with cat-like tread, grasping a policeman's powerful nightstick.

Down it rattled upon the skull of the man who was fumbling at the safe.

He dropped like a stone.

Lightning could not have been quicker than the second blow, which sent the man who held the drill on top of his friend before he could fully turn his head.

The third dropped the bag and tried to take hold of the club.

He got it, too, but the victory was an empty one, for Martin Rush's left hand was like iron, and already the fingers were about the safe-blower's throat.

It was a desperate struggle, but a brief one, and the handcuffs were snapped about the fellow's wrists when he yielded at last.

"Don't try to chloroform a man with his nostrils plugged next time," said the detective, his jaw snapping ominously, at the same time tearing the black cloth from the lower part of the robber's face.

"Ah, I thought so," he drawled. "Happy to meet you, Herbert Wardman. Possibly you may not have the pleasure of my acquaintance, so allow me to introduce myself. My name is Martin Rush."

"Chenoa! Chenoa!" called the conductor, as he passed through the smoker.

There were no passengers for Chenoa in the smoker, but there were three in the express car, and they went back to Chicago, handcuffed together in No. 5.

Of course the C. & A., acting for the express company, honored Martin Rush's bill when he put it in; for the network of evidence which the detective managed to weave about Wardman through Caryl Dorne's efforts in New York, made it plain that he was also concerned in the previous robberies.

The bill was rather a large one, the amount being exactly $3,000, and it was paid on the day that Helen Blywick married Caryl Dorne, with the full sanction of the executors of her father's will.

"But how in thunder did those three fellows get into the coffin boxes, that's what I want to know?" remarked the manager, when Martin Rush called to explain the outcome of his little game of bluff.

"Simple as rolling off a log," replied the detective. "Their hold-out was in an old house adjoining the cemetery where the bodies of the three dead miners lay in a receiving vault.

"In every instance, where these robberies have been perpetrated, the thieves have allowed themselves to be carried into the express car in a packing case of some kind, the empty boxes being subsequently thrown from the train.

"In all previous cases, each package was different, and came on at different stations—I hold positive evidence of this fact—but in this particular case they saw a chance to sneak the coffins out of their boxes in the receiving vault, and they took it, knowing that the corpses were to be expressed to Mexico, Missouri, on our train. It was their first attempt to play their bold bluff game with Three of a Kind."

THE REVELATION

By ORLEY E. GRAY

JOHN BLAKELY had been an ardent student for years. He had followed faithfully, fervently, and of his own volition, such studies as are followed by few: He had studied paleography, and had made translations of the Koran, the Scriptures, and many ancient writings of the Egyptians, and of the Assyrians; he had delved into archæology, and had made excavations at the ancient city of Boz in Assyria, at the tombs of the Pharaohs in Egypt, and at the Temple of the Sun in Peru; he had pressed his investigations into the realm of paleontology, and had read the record of the Ages as preserved in the rock strata of many parts of the world; he had spent long hours in the mastery of metaphysics and psychology.

In all of this he had had but one purpose; he sought to discover the truth about that which has troubled the mind of man from time immemorial, about which there is a deeply hidden but ever present disturbing doubt in the most orthodox minds; he sought for the truth concerning the beginning and the end of things, life, death, and what comes after.

So far, he had been completely baffled and compelled to believe that all the theories thus far advanced were the attempts of a superstitious people to allay their fears.

Within the past year he had taken up the study of mesmerism. Having gone into this study in the hope that it might aid him in his quest, he pursued it with his usual zeal and soon attained a high degree of proficiency in the art.

On this particular May morning, he was sitting in his magnificently equipped study, trying to think of a new line of attack. So far, all ideas had been rejected as visionary, and he was just composing himself for a nap when the postman came.

Blakely's correspondence was small at all times, and this morning there was only one letter. He turned this letter over disinterestedly and noticed that it was postmarked at Sydney, Australia.

He broke the seal and read the following:

SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA, May 19, 1910.

MR. JNO. BLAKELY, 2018 Dearborn street,
Chicago, Illinois, U. S. A.

DEAR OLD JOHN: I know that you will be surprised to hear from me who have not written you in years.

The truth of the matter is that I am coming home to die. The doctors tell me that I have not more than four months to live at longest.

I have no relatives and but few friends in the States, so I expect to end my days in some good sanatorium in Chicago. I thought that, as you had been my best friend in the old days, you might be willing to pick out a suitable place and make arrangements for my coming.

Don't spare expense, for I have more money than I shall likely spend in this world.

Thanking you for this service, which I am sure you will render, I am your friend in distress,

WILBERT NEFLING.

P. S.—Let me hear from you by cable at my expense, as I am in a hurry to get back to my native land.

For a long time Blakely sat with the open letter in his hand, lost in meditation; then he leaped to his feet, exclaiming to himself:

"At last! At last! I am sure I can find out in that way."

He hurriedly donned his coat and hat, rushed from the house, and caught the next uptown car.

When he arrived in the business district he left the car and went directly to the nearest telegraph office and sent the following telegram:

CHICAGO, May 30, 1910.

MR. WILBERT NEFLING, Sydney, Australia.

Am making all arrangements for your entertainment. Will meet you in New York. Let me know on what ship you sail. JOHN BLAKELY.

On a fine June morning four weeks later Blakely and his friend were seated in a parlor car enroute from New York to Chicago.

Nefling, who was in the last stages of tuberculosis, was weak and wan, but still able to enjoy the pleasures derived from the return to his native land and the company of an old friend.

"You see," Blakely was saying, "there is no one but the servants and myself at my place; I have nothing which I would rather do than visit you, and you will be much better off there than in any public sanatorium. So, I have made arrangements for you to stay with me.

"Also, I believe that I can give you hypnotic treatments which may do you permanent good."

"You are very kind," Nefling said. "And while I never expect to be able to repay you in this world, I may be able to in the next."

"I believe that you can," Blakely replied with an earnestness that surprised his friend.

After this they talked of various topics of mutual interest, gazed silently out of the window, or dozed languidly in their seats until they arrived at their destination.

Once comfortably established in his suburban home, Blakely endeavored to make his friend forget his sickness and to aid him to recover some of his old health and buoyancy; but it was soon evident that such was not to be. Nefling's little remaining strength was failing rapidly, and each day brought him perceptibly nearer the end.

One day, as they were sitting in the great study, surrounded by massive volumes dealing with every phase of that subject whose interpretation had been the all-absorbing interest in Blakely's life, Nefling spoke querulously:

"Among all these mighty volumes of theology, psychology, paleontology, and so on, have you nothing that will impart cheer to a departing soul?"

"As you know," Blakely answered, "I have spent my life searching for the truth, which, if found, would bring either cheer or despair to all mankind. So far I have found nothing which I could accept as true. Somehow, I have always felt that the truth, once found, will be so self-evident as to need no proof, nor leave any room for doubt."

"I would give everything to know what the purpose of it all really is," Nefling said.

"It is something which mankind ought to know, and I should like to be able to give it them," Blakely replied.

"It seems to me that there is no chance of ever finding out," Nefling said wearily. "I would gladly give my few remaining days in order that others might know that about which I can only guess and fear."

"If it were in your power to come back after death and make known the true condition of the dead, would you do it?" Blakely asked.

"Most willingly," Nefling answered, "but it is not possible, else some one would have done it ere this."

"I am not so sure about that," Blakely answered. "And at least it can do no harm to try. For years I have tried to solve this problem, and now, with your help, I feel sure that I shall succeed.

"As I have told you before, I have made a rather intensive study of mesmerism. I believe that, through the medium of a mind *en rapport* with it, a mind, under mesmeric influence, can perceive and make known things which are happening at a distance, things which have happened in the past, and things which will happen in the future.

"Clearly, it is the mind, or soul, which I hold to be one and the same, that is under the mesmeric influence, for while the body lies supine before you, the mind goes hither and yon to do your bidding.

"I can mesmerize a person and instruct him to do a certain thing on a certain set date in the future, and he will forget all about it until the set time arrives, then he will remember and will go and perform the act as directed."

Here Blakely leaned forward, placed his hand on his friend's knee, looked closely at him, and asked:

"Don't you believe that, if a passing soul were mesmerized and instructed to return and report its impressions and experiences after death, it would return at the appointed time and do so?"

Nefling gazed thoughtfully at the floor for a few moments, and replied: "I do."

"Then," Blakely asked, "have you any objections to coming back and telling me that for which I have so long thought?"

"No," Nefling replied. "I rather like the idea, and will be pleased to do so, if I can."

"I am quite certain that you can," Blakely said. "And now, if you are ready, we may begin those hypnotic treatments of which we have talked."

Without further discussion Blakely arose and, standing over his friend, began making the customary passes with his hands.

Nefling lay back in the great armchair in which he had been sitting, closed his eyes, and in a few minutes was breathing deeply and regularly.

"Are you sleeping?" Blakely asked after a short time.

"Yes—that is, my body is sleeping."

"And your mind; what of it?"

"My mind, or rather *I*, is free of the body and can perceive things which were imperceptible to my bodily senses."

"Can you see me, now that your eyes are closed?"

"No, I cannot see you, but I can perceive you much more plainly than I ever saw you. To see you, I should have to use the eyes of the body."

"Can you perceive any of the things of the past or future which were not perceptible to you before?"

"Yes, for instance, I now perceive that your chief object in bringing me here was to try the experiment with my mind."

"Are you resentful?"

"Not at all; in fact, I am glad of what may prove to be a chance to help lift the load of ages from the mind of man."

"Will our experiment prove successful?"

"I cannot tell at present."

Blakely now made a few more passes with his hands, and the patient immediately sank into a profound slumber.

"You will now forget all that about which we have been talking," Blakely instructed him. "But to-morrow morning at ten you will remember them again and come to me and ask that we resume your treatments."

The next day at ten Nefling came and asked that they renew their researches.

From that time on he was constantly under Blakely's hypnotic power. Always their conversations ended with Blakely's giving a command to Nefling to do some specific thing at a set time on the following day, and always the command was obeyed to the letter.

Then came the time when Nefling's physician told him that he had but very few days to live, and, curiously enough, he told them that he did not care, but that he was anxious for the end to come, so that he might see what lay beyond.

One evening in early September Blakely was sitting by his friend's bedside reading to him, when Nefling suddenly raised himself on his elbow and gasped:

"John, I am dying. No, no! Don't call the doctor; it would do no good. Get—me—under—the—influence—quickly."

He fell back upon the bed struggling for breath, and Blakely, quite calmly, arose and began the preliminary passes which would put the patient under his control.

At first, it seemed that the patient's condition would prevent his passing under the influence, but at last his troubled breathing grew easier, his tense limbs relaxed, and he slept.

"Are you resting?" Blakely asked.

"I am," Nefling replied; "the pain has gone."

"How long have you yet to live?"

"Until you wake me, or bid me die. Do not wake me, for then I shall die in great misery."

"If I neither wake you nor bid you die, will you not die?"

"Yes, after a time, but I might last for days. However, I wish you to bid me die, for then I shall die easy, and, now that I am this close, I have lost all fear and am anxious to go on."

"Have you any conception of what awaits you?"

"No, only I hope it is better than I had ever supposed."

"Do you think that you will be able to come back to me one week from to-night, if I command you to do so?"

"It seems to me, now, as if I would have to do anything which you command me to do."

"Then I command you to come to me in this room one week from to-night, and tell me all that you can about the beginning and the hereafter. I shall be seated at that table, and shall expect you at the stroke of ten. Do not fail me."

"I shall not fail."

"Now, what can I do for you?"

"Nothing; if you are through, let me die."

"Very well, you may depart. My friend, my blessings go with you."

Nefling sank into a more profound slumber, and his breathing grew short and labored. Blakely stepped to the phone and summoned a physician, but the patient was dead before he arrived.

It was the night for Nefling's return, and Blakely was seated at the table awaiting the stroke of ten. He sat with knitted brows, and with his whole mind concentrated on the return of his friend.

Suddenly the clock began striking, and immediately Blakely was sure that he was not alone. Consciousness of a Presence came to him slowly but surely, until he knew that It was just across the table from him. He could see nothing, hear nothing; yet he felt that It Was. He sat silent, waiting for It to speak to him.

Then there sank in upon his consciousness the fact that It had no bodily mouth, and, consequently, could make no physical sound; it was making itself manifest through his mind.

Mechanically, Blakely took out a pencil, pulled a tablet of paper to him, and began writing that which his mind absorbed from the Presence.

For five minutes he wrote rapidly, then he was overcome with a great weariness and suddenly fell asleep.

The sun was shining brightly when he awoke. He looked at his watch; it was eight-thirty. He had slept nearly ten hours.

He remembered the happenings of the night before, but could remember nothing of what he had written.

Slowly and fearfully he pulled the paper towards him and began to read.

As he read a look of joy and peace settled on his face. He read through to the end, leaped to his feet, exclaiming:

"How wonderfully plain and simple it is. And to think that it has never been thought of before. At last mankind shall know the truth and need no longer go doubtfully, fearfully to the grave.

"I shall have the good tidings published in every paper in the land to-day and to-morrow the whole world shall be at peace."

He seized his hat and, with the precious paper clasped in his left hand, rushed from the house to spread the glad tidings afar.

That afternoon one of the leading evening papers of Chicago appeared with the following headlines:

JOHN BLAKELY MEETS DEATH BY ACCIDENT.
Eccentric Millionaire Killed by Street Car.
Body Somewhat Mangled and Left Hand Missing.

OLD VIOLIN DISCOVERED

A LETTER from a remote part of Canada brings me a story that I like. "There is a very good English violin repairer here," it says, "a real artist in his way, and I often go to his workshop for a chat and to have my soundpost shifted or some little job done for my violin.

"The other day an old dilapidated violin was brought to him for repair while I was there. On opening it we saw at once that it was a genuine old Italian from the workmanship. No one can say exactly what maker. It is undoubtedly the large Amati model, but lots of makers followed that model.

"On looking more closely we saw a dirty bit of paper stuck in a corner, not where the label usually goes. He cleaned it very carefully and, to my delight, we discovered the following little distich:

" 'In silva viva silui,
Suaviter Jam mortua cano.'

"Strange that this should have been put in, probably 175 years ago, either in Cremona or Brescia, on the lower slopes of the Alps, and that it should come to light eight or nine thousand miles away, almost in the Arctic regions, where nothing in nature ever sings, and that it should fall into the hands of two real lovers of music and violins!"

INK GAVE AWAY SECRET

HOW the ink in which a document was written affected the ownership of vast properties is told by a writer in *Case and Comment*. In the year 1880 certain persons in New Mexico claimed a huge tract of hundreds of thousands of acres as the heirs of one Bartolomo Baca, to whom, they alleged, the Spanish Government had, in 1817, made a grant. They exhibited the deed of grant and started a lawsuit to obtain the land.

On the trial the deed of grant stood every test of genuineness, and a decree was entered awarding the immense property to the claimants. The defense had not been able to shake the claimants' evidence, and to every one it looked as if the matter was at an end.

To every one except John Waldron, the attorney for the Santa Fe Railroad Company, who had been the principal losers. Although he had no evidence of the fact, he was convinced that the pretended deed of grant from the Spanish Crown was a forgery. For months he brooded over the matter, seeking some clue, but in vain.

He had almost determined to give no further thought to the case, when, in idly drowsing over his papers one evening, his eye wandered over this paragraph: "Aniline ink was invented in 1869 in Germany."

He read it once, with no serious thought. Then, as he read it again, the paragraph became luminous with possibilities. "What kind of ink was the Baca land grant written in?" was his thought.

By permission of the court he had a chemist make a quiet test of the ink of the grant, and when he read the chemist's report, he cabled to a certain German chemist in Europe.

Six months after, when the case was, by permission of the court, reopened on account of newly discovered evidence, a white-bearded stranger took the stand, and in ten minutes sent the case of the Baca heirs out of court and the heirs themselves into the penitentiary, by swearing that he was the inventor of aniline ink, that the invention was made in 1869, and that the ink in which the Bartolomo Baca grant was written was aniline.

A similar slip was discovered in a celebrated court-martial case which came up for trial in 1871. A young lieutenant was accused of having forged another man's name to a promissory note, and obtained money on it. The accusing witness produced the note in question, which was written upon a sheet of blue-ruled "foolscap" paper, and bore a date of the year 1867.

Everything had gone against the defendant, and the case was about to go to the jury, when the wife of the lieutenant, who had clung stanchly to him, and was sitting beside him at the trial, happened to pick up the note and hold it in such a way that a strong light from the window shone through the paper. There, to her joy, she read the watermark, "Swampscott Mills, 1869."

In other words, the note purported to have been written on the paper two years before the paper had been manufactured.

RACHE'

By WILL HANSON ROYCE

IT was hot. Not a breath of air was stirring anywhere, and the scorching rays of the torrid Arizonian sun beat pitilessly down on the little weather-beaten shack standing alone in the shadow of the foothills. A clump of low, scraggy cacti grew up against the side of the shack and scratched the rough, unpainted boards whenever the wind blew. But the wind did not blow now, and the same awful heat that had throbbed over the dry, grassy prairie all day, and seemed to almost warp the very sky-line itself, was burning and curling the dry sagebush and buffalo grass, and driving every living, breathing creature in Alkali Gulch, even to the lizards, into the shade.

The door of the little shack was propped wide open, and so were the three small windows, to let in what little coolness there was in the sultry twilight outside—which was little enough, to be sure.

All day long the burning August sun had beat mercilessly down upon the little twelve by fourteen rough-boarded shack. In the summer days the heat cracked the parched, hard-baked Arizonian soil and curled the dry prairie grass about the shack. It was hot now; there was no doubt at all about that. The heat was almost stifling inside, but even that was preferable to the cold winter days and nights when the roof let the howling blizzard in, and the wind and snow sifted through the wide cracks of the rough board sides of the little shack.

Rache'—the rest of it was Rachel—sat in the open door of the shack with her mother, and they were talking in their sharp, cracked, Arizonian voices together. There was but one thing to be talked about, and that was Pap's big strike. Nearly everything that they could think of to say about it had already been said over and over again, and so, for the lack of anything else to talk about—for women must talk and men must work—they were just going over it again.

"In course it hain't a dead sure thing jist yit, yer know, Rache'," said the tall, gaunt mother to the slender girl. "But it looks as much like it as one cayuse looks like ernother."

"Pap's a-working of it mighty close, hain't he, marm?"

"I reckon as how he air jist now, 'cause yer see as like's not some one might come erlong and jump ther claim, if they knowed it, when Pap's gone."

The girl looked out through the small, square window, high up in the side of the wall of the shack. Her quick glance swept along the two shining rails that glimmered under the throbbing heat of the afternoon sun down there by Alkali Station, a mile away to the westward—past the almost dry river-bed and away to the buttes beyond. There was a notch over there in the foothills—she could just see it through the hazy heat—Blue Canyon, they always called it, and Pap was over there in that canyon somewhere working in that terrible heat—working in that same nervous, restless way he always worked; spasmodically, when there was a possible object with a chance of success in view. He was over there alone, digging his heavy pick and shovel into the hard-baked gravel, and scanning each and every cold, broken rock or boulder, for the tiny, yellow specks, which meant so much to him, and that was to keep his flask full, and to put something a little better than a shack over their heads. Rache' felt for him in that awful heat—she felt that she could see him as he toiled there alone in that silent canyon. She saw the great drops of sweat gather on his wrinkled forehead and trickle down his thin, pinched features, and fall as he raised his feeble, old hand to wipe them away. She could see them as they fell upon the rocks leaving their dark mark of moisture there for a moment, then drying away, and she felt her heart go out to him in one great bound of love and pity.

"But he wouldn't let me go 'long and help him—never would, not if he was a-workin' both his two hands off," she muttered to herself.

Rache' went and set the little table for supper. There was no use in waiting for Pap, his coming was uncertain, for he often stayed and worked in the coolness of the night when the moon was full, and it was full to-night, and so the two women sat down and ate in silence.

There was no sense in talking it all over again. It would not do to count too much on it. There had been other strikes of Pap's in promise for years, and they had always failed—nothing had ever come of any of them—absolutely nothing.

The twilight deepened. The glare had gone out of the day, and now through the open door the growing coolness outside came in and they watched for Pap's dust meanwhile, both wondering what news he would bring of the strike. Twilight faded slowly away, and the night began to gather. Pap was late, but that was nothing, he had been just as late many times before. It was not strange at all, for Pap was getting old and slow with the weight of years. They sat there in the open door together—Rache' and marm—and fixed their eyes on the notch over there in the distant buttes, now beginning to look dim and uncertain in the gathering night.

"He's coming," muttered Rache'; but she was mistaken; it was nothing but a whirl of dry dust in the air, and they rubbed their eyes, wondered and looked again. The blood-red moon began to peep up and grow larger and larger over there beyond the distant mountain range, and it looked down upon them through a hazy maze of heat. Still they sat there and waited—watching for Pap's dust—Rache' and marm.

"Guess as how I'd better go 'long and see what's a-keeping him," said Rache', rising to her feet and peering from beneath her hand off across the prairie toward the buttes.

"If he's a-going to stay over there all night, he'll want a bite to eat and a blanket. I'll go 'long over and see, anyway, and I'll come back ag'in with the news, if there be any. Get him a bite o' something, marm, and I'll go and ketch ole Bill and strap the blanket on him."

The sultry night breeze told their secrets to the girl as she rode the slow old mustang along over the trail leading to the notch in the buttes. The breezes of night hold many a dark secret for those who care to listen to them.

The prairie air came warm, then grew almost chilly as she rode along. Old Bill was awful slow and tired, she thought, for he minded no more the strokes of her hand

than he did the brushing of the sagebrush and mesquite against his lean flank and sides. He made a plunge now and then, but that was when he stumbled into a prairie dog's hole, or a pebble rolled beneath his unshod hoof.

At last she reached the canyon, which seemed to be done in black and white on a dark, hazy background of uncertainty, so light did the blood-red moon make the more prominent and exposed parts, and so dark were the silent and shadowy places.

"It's awful dark and still in there," she said to herself.

As she drew nearer she heard the whinny of her father's horse tethered beside the rocks, nibbling a clump of dry buffalo grass. She dismounted and left old Bill to munch the grass with him, while she climbed up the steep trail and came to the bed where her father had been digging for days with pick and shovel in the lonely mountainside.

There he was now. She saw him sitting on the ground and leaning back against a huge boulder. The moon shone down upon his old, patched trousers and dirty flannel shirt. His head was bent forward and his face was concealed by the rim of his old slouch hat.

"Pap," she called, and her voice broke the oppressive stillness of the silent canyon, "I come to see if yer was a-coming home to-night, 'cause if yer hain't I've brought yer a blanket and a bite o' something fer to eat. Why didn't yer come home, Pap, two hours ago, 'stid o' workin' and a-workin' till yer was all fagged out?"

He did not seem to hear the girl's question—he did not stir or even lift his head. A puff of wind came sighing down through the quiet canyon and, striking the slim form of the young girl, made her shiver.

"So yer a-sleeping on the rocks, be yer? I'll bet yer took too much out'en the flask, now didn't yer, Pap?" She stepped a little nearer.

"Hullo, Pap! Yer hain't drunk ag'in, be yer? I'm clean gone, dead ashamed o' yer, I am." She swung herself lightly up onto the rocks beside him and gave him a dig in the side with her bare foot, and then she stooped and shook him vigorously by the shoulder.

"Pap, wake up, yer'll ketch yer death o' cold a-sleepin' out here on ther rocks this way. We uns, me and marm, have been a-lookin' fer yer till we couldn't see, while yer was up here drunk an' havin' a good ole guzzlin' time of it all by yerself, and you not carin' a cuss. Yer played us a durn mean trick, Pap, an' yer know yer have. Come 'long home now."

She bent and shook his shoulder more vigorously than before; his hat fell off and his head fell back. His face looked strangely white to her.

"Oh, Gor! Pap, what ails yer? Be yer sick ag'in?"

She felt his face. It was cold—stone cold to her warm hand, and the touch chilled her to the heart. She knelt down and pulled open the front of his ragged, flannel shirt, and felt for the beat of his heart, but the last throb had gone out of it long since.

Mounting her father's horse and leading old Bill along behind, she went down the deserted canyon.

"Pap, Pap!" and up and down through the lonely canyon the echoes took up her wail and re-echoed it from rock to rock.

"My pore ole Pap! Be ye dead?"

A big green lizard went scuttering down the slope, an owl in a scrub oak near at hand gave a melancholy hoot, and then in answer far out on the prairie the sulking coyotes set up their dismal howls.

She gasped and seemed to choke for a moment, and her head swam rapidly, while her very breath appeared to be almost cut off, and she felt that she must fall down there beside him on the rocks. Then the cry of the snarling coyotes fell upon her ear with all their horrible meaning, as she grasped the rough boulder beside her for support, and tried to breathe again. The coyotes howled on in awful chorus, and she shuddered as she heard them coming nearer.

"They shan't have yer, Pap; they shan't get yer! I'll take yer home to marm," and her breath came free again.

She grasped the shoulders of the dead man, keeping as

much of his body from the rocks as possible, then half dragged and pulled him down the rough, stony trail toward the place where she had left old Bill. She shuddered and grew faint when she heard his boot heels drag along over the stones and gravel, but she kept on with a grim determination until at last, panting and exhausted, she laid his limp, lifeless body down on the ground beside old Bill, who snorted and pricked up his ears in alarm. Then, with many a backward glance from time to time, she found her father's knife, and cutting two slender poles, she constructed a rude "dust-trailer" by binding the end of the poles to the lean sides of old Bill with a bit of rope and a broken strap. The moon rose over the peaks of the lonely canyon walls, and its rays fell down full upon them as she rolled her dead over gently upon the rude conveyance, and as she bound him securely on with his belt, she saw a great clot of blood on the back of Pap's old flannel shirt, and just over it a clean-cut bullet hole. With a shudder and a groan, she rose to her feet and looked at her hands; there was blood upon them, and on the skirt of her dress, too.

"Somebody has jumped Pap's claim," she muttered grimly, and she set her teeth hard together and clenched her small, brown hands until the nails began to cut into the palm. Yes, somebody had jumped the old man's claim. They had shot him in the back while he was at work, then he had crawled as far as the rock and had died there. It was a strike, sure enough—a big one, too—for the pocket of his tattered old shirt contained more than one yellow-specked nugget. It was a sure strike all right, but it had cost his life.

Rache' looked off up and down the canyon with awful eyes, and smote the empty air with her clenched fist. Then quickly mounting her father's horse and leading old Bill carefully along behind, she went down along the deserted canyon, and out over the moonlit prairie toward the little shack where marm was waiting—waiting for the news of the strike.

The coyotes followed her, sulking and snarling along in the denser shadows, and almost rending her heart with their cries, but she kept steadily on, looking neither to the right nor the left, and just before midnight the sad little procession drew up before the shack.

Marm was still up, waiting for Rache's return with the news, and hearing the hoofbeats on the hard-baked soil outside, she opened the door and peeped forth out into the night.

"Is that you, Rache'?" she called. "Did yer find him? Is it a dead sure strike yit?"

Rache' slid down from the horse and ran to the door of the shack.

"Marm! Marm!" was her cry. "They've killed him! They've jumped the claim! Pore old Pap!"

It was a week since they laid Pap in the shallow grave scooped out of the gravel just behind the little shack. The warm winds were rustling through the sagebrush and the low clump of scraggy cacti growing beside the shack and scattering their dry, parched leaves over the low mound, unmarked save by the few stunted house-plants marm and Rache' had transplanted there, and even they, too, were looking wilted and dead beneath the pitiless glare of the Arizonian sun.

Marm was alone. Rache' was up there in the canyon somewhere—up behind the very rock where she had found her father that awful night a week ago, and the draught that came down through the rocky walls of the canyon from the mountains above and beyond seemed grateful to her after the long, hot ride over the dusty plain. She drank in long breaths of it, but all the time her eyes were glued upon the hole over there where Pap had been at work digging for days before he made the great strike of his life and had died by it. For an hour or more she had crouched in the shadow of the huge boulder.

"Strange he don't show up, that dirty greaser, José Mendoza. 'Twas him as wiped pore ole Pap out and jumped the claim. He'll come some time, but I can wait."

She let her glance drop to something that gleamed along the top of the rock beside her. It was only the barrel of her father's old rifle. The warm breeze rustled a dry snake skin on the rocks below, and a toad hopped into the shade and sat there looking up at her with unblinking eyes. She started a trifle. She saw the form of a man over there, and as she watched she saw him steal cautiously out of the depths of the almost deserted canyon, and creep steadily and stealthily through the falling shades of the coming night, straight up the trail in the direction of the little mine where Pap had made the one great strike of his life.

Rache' was expecting him—had been lying there beside that boulder since early morn, and now that he was coming at last, a grim smile played about her tightly closed lips as she watched the figure move silently as a shadow from rock to rock until he reached the little mine, then, with many an anxious glance about, pick up the dead man's pick and shovel and begin to dig. A pebble rattled noisily down the slope, and the man heard it as it struck and bounded on the rocks below the girl. For a moment a dark, swarthy face looked up toward the boulder where the girl crouched, and she could see the look of exultant satisfaction, mingled with fear, in the small, evil eyes as he peered nervously about. All was silent again. He suspected nothing and returned to his work. Rache' slowly moved the muzzle of Pap's old rifle an inch or two along the top of the boulder until it covered the man below—until the sights bore directly on the flap of the pocket in the left breast of his dirty flannel shirt.

"He's further off than I reckoned on," she muttered. "A good hundred rods, sure. The middle sight's the best, anyhow."

She bent her head and squinted leisurely through the pin-hole sight, and then slowly lowered the muzzle a trifle more to the left. She smiled again as the little round dot bore more directly on the very center of the flap of the pocket. Out through the notch on the prairie the coyotes still sulked and waited for the night's coming.

She hugged the butt of the rifle caressingly, and it fitted snug against her shoulder. Her right hand moved slowly forward a little, and the slender brown finger smoothed the black trigger lightly, almost lovingly. The man paused a moment, straightened up and saw her there—but it was too late, for the brown finger bent, and there was a sharp crack that re-echoed through the silent canyon walls from rock to rock, and then died away in lingering echoes. The man reeled and pitched forward, face downward, across the dirt, almost fresh from the little mine.

Rache' rose slowly to her feet and stood staring blindly off across the canyon to where the man lay, then, drawing the empty shell from the still smoking rifle and shoving in a loaded one, she clambered down over the rocks, gun in hand, and stood over the body of the man who had jumped Pap's claim.

"I oughter a-shot yer in the back same as yer did pore ole Pap," she said grimly. "But I hain't no greaser, I hain't."

Then she moved away with a light step, hugging the old rifle still closer under her arm, from the silent canyon.

MY WIFE'S BLUFF

By THOMAS Q. SEABROOKE

"WOMEN," I said to my wife, "can doubtless do many things, but there is one thing they can't do: they can't play poker."

Now my wife is not a "new woman"—although I need hardly say, if my reader be male and married, that I should not dare thus openly to call her an old one, either—but she has a most potent and powerful respect for the capabilities of her sex in general, and her own in particular. Therefore my wife looked a whole essay, but contented herself with utterance of a somewhat scornful and wholly incredulous "why?"

"Because," I replied, undeterred by the gleam in her eye—I was always noted for my recklessness—"while they may have all the necessary knowledge and theoretical skill, they can't bluff for a cent or a blue chip. They have no command over their countenances; they always show their emotions. Now poker is pre-eminently a game of appearances; in fact, not to put too fine a point upon it, it's a game of silent mendacity; and, while be it far from me to question your sex's powers in the line of talk, when it comes to showing in their faces what they don't feel in the way of disappointment or delight, they are distinctly not in it."

"Have you done?" my wife icily demanded.

"Go to the bat," was my terse reply; the atmosphere threatened storm, and I was summoning my forces for resistance.

"Then," said my wife in tones which would have frozen a polar bear, "all I have to say is that, as usual, you don't know what you are talking about. There is nothing a woman can't do as well as a man, if she gives her mind to it."

"I beg your pardon; her what?" I interrupted.

"Her mind," my wife emphatically repeated; "and if your only argument is to be rudeness——"

"Oh, no, not at all," I apologetically replied; "I didn't mean to be rude, I assure you. I was only thinking how I should like to see a woman give her mind to throwing a stone at a cat, for instance."

My wife responded only by what might by one who lived not in awe of her be termed a snort.

"But really," I continued after a pause, "I mean what I say, and it's a somewhat curious example of limitation. I've seen women who could play a fair game of whist, although very few of them can understand a forcing game, but I never yet saw one who could play even a second-rate game of poker. No woman can bluff; nobody who can't bluff can win; therefore no woman can win. Q. E. D."

"I don't know what Q. E. D. means," my wife said, "but if it stands for Queer Errors Debated, it is quite applicable. I'm sure that if I chose I could play poker quite as well as any man that ever lived."

"That's the worst of arguing with one of your sex," I said with lofty masculine contempt. "She always brings the matter down to a personal basis, and then one can't, for the sake of politeness, contradict her. But I hold to my opinion, allee samee."

"It's not the first time," my wife retorted, "that I have known men to appeal to politeness to cover lack of reason. You forget we've been married six years."

"Pardon me," I replied with formal courtesy, "if nothing else forbade such a lack of memory, the ratio between my banker's account and your dressmaker's bills would do so."

My wife put the accusation by with silent scorn.

"But I am minded," I went on, "to prove my point, although it is something which I rarely do."

"That," my wife interrupted, "is the first true word I have heard you say for an hour."

"I meant," I said severely, "that it is something which I rarely trouble myself to do. An average intellect would have understood, but to a woman one must speak by the card, in pity for their inabilities, and I am thus to blame. But I was going on to say that we will put the matter to the test, just to show you that you are wedded to a man who speaks not without reason. The boys will be here to-night, and I propose that you take my place for, say, ten hands of poker. That will make me, as your banker, pay pretty dear for the pleasure of proving how much I know; but never mind, in that time you'll be sure to have an opportunity for bluffing, to say nothing about other fine points, and as you have looked over my shoulder pretty often, and I have carefully explained to you the values of the different hands, you know enough about the game to make it a fair test. And I'm willing to gamble you don't win a pot."

It may be well to explain at this juncture that five old chums, "of which I was one," were accustomed to meet at one another's houses two or three times a week, and refresh our strained intellects with a little game of draw. We played ten-cent ante and fifty-cent limit, and as we were all about equal in luck and ability, and were moderately well-off in this world's goods, no harm was done and much amusement obtained.

"I do not approve," my wife said, "of a woman playing for money, but for the sake of showing you how little you really know about us, I will do as you say."

"And you may do so," I replied, "with a clear conscience. For you will not be playing for money; the others will be playing for yours. It will be charity, not gambling."

"We shall see," was all the reply deigned by my wife.

Of course, when the boys came that evening, I said nothing as to the debate which was to be put to the test. That would have been to handicap my wife, and for the sake of fairness—and my pocket—I had no desire to do this. I merely said that towards the close of the evening—we had a fixed hour for stopping play—my wife, actuated thereto by a wish to taste the delights of the game, would take my place, I sitting behind her to watch her play, but in no wise assisting or advising her. And so it was arranged.

When the time came for the experiment, I had won comfortably, and was therefore in good mood to look with resignation upon the drain upon my resources which I

foresaw. My life partner assumed with calm confidence my vacated chair, arranged in patriotic order the chips which I handed her, made every one change places so that she would have the grain of the table with her, and prepared for business.

Before the arrival of the enemy my wife had insisted upon my catechizing her until I was assured of her knowledge of the relative values of the different hands, so I felt that I had done all in my power to bring the matter in dispute to a fair test. It fell to her to ante, and when she raised her cards, she gazed upon a hand without the semblance of a pair. It did, however, contain the four, six and eight of hearts, and these, with the fatuous hope of the beginner, she retained, drawing two cards. When my eyes fell upon these I could hardly restrain a start of amazement. They were the five of clubs and the seven of spades!

Briggs, who sat at her left, took one card, and the rest three each. My wife, after a glance at her hand, in which I could detect only a faint expression of annoyance, had laid it before her on the table. I said unto myself, with reflective modulation, "Hum!"

Briggs studied his cards for a moment, hesitated, and then bet a white chip, signifying that he thought his hand was worth a dime. Hart stayed; the rest passed, until it came to my wife. That lady looked at Briggs with a light smile, and calmly threw her hand into the pack of discards.

This time I could not refrain from a gasp of mingled wonder and horror. My wife turned upon me an angelic look of surprise, but made no sign. In another moment Briggs had shown down three queens and two nines.

I was simply lost in admiration, using the word in both its senses.

"For years," I mused, "I have played with Briggs, and yet, by no sign that I have observed, could I possibly have read such a hand in his face. Yet this weaker vessel, in her first trial of strength against him, penetrates his secret, and in vain is the snare spread for her feet. Verily there is more in this than I wot."

And withal, there was no triumph in my wife's demeanor; merely a gentle complacency as one who acted wisely, yet did nothing worthy of marvel. Although it was for me a moment of defeat, I rejoiced in her skill as if it had been my own.

The game went on, and everything fell to my wife. Less than two pair it seemed impossible for her to hold, and she had none of that fortune which is so peculiarly exasperating to the poker player, of having his good hands always run up against some one a trifle better, or else against those of no value whatever—things equally conducive to profanity. At length, the hour for ceasing play was almost at hand, with my wife a huge winner, at least for the stakes for which we played. At this juncture it was proposed that the concluding hand should be played as a jack-pot, and the proposition was assented to by all.

Somehow the cards now began to run wild, as sometimes happens, and there were five rounds before any one was able to open. Then Briggs, who at that time was, besides my wife, the only winner, and that to but a small amount, announced that he would open for a white chip. All stayed, my wife with four spades and a diamond. When she raised her draw, I saw that she had been given a small club.

I was sorry, for in spite of the defeat of my theories—save that relative to bluffing, which had had no opportunity of test—I was, by this time, strongly interested in her success, moved thereto by respect for the able manner in which she had handled that first hand, and I had set my heart upon her winning that last pot. But that was evidently not to be, for her hand was but queen high.

Briggs bet a chip, and the others successively threw down their cards, until only my wife remained. I looked to see her follow their example, as a matter of course, but she calmly saw that chip and raised the limit. It took my breath away.

I looked at her face. She seemed to be struggling with a smile of confidence, to be repressing a look of certain victory. I said to myself: "There is the end of all my theories. I never saw such acting in my life; it is the very perfection of bluffing."

Briggs, who had drawn three cards, looked at her face for an instant—and then laid down his hand.

"I see you've got me, Mrs. Blank," he said, "and it's no use trying to bluff with only openers. I'm forty cents ahead now, and I'd rather stay ahead. Take the pot."

"My dear," I said to my wife that night, as we were making ready for our couch, "as a wise man should, when confronted with refutation, I desire to retract all that I said concerning a woman's inability to play poker. Anything more masterly than your laying down that straight in the first hand I never saw, except——"

"Was it a straight?" my wife interrupted, as soon as she could get sufficient pins removed from her mouth to permit speech. "I only noticed that the cards I drew were small ones and never thought of counting the spots. How stupid of me!"

"Well," I resumed, somewhat disillusioned but strong in my admiration of her histrionic powers, "if I gave you too much credit for penetration in that instance, I must humbly apologize for what I said about none of your sex being able to bluff. That last hand was the loveliest case of bluffing I ever witnessed. To look at you any one would have supposed you had a great hand."

"I don't know what you're talking about!" my wife rejoined indignantly; "I wasn't bluffing at all. How could I when I had a flush? All my cards were the same color!"

And so my theories remain intact.

CRIME TREES DEAD

THE three oaks are dead. The ancient trees that witnessed the tragedy of Marion Lambert, Lake Forest school-girl, who died of poison, and for whose death Will H. Orpet, University of Wisconsin student, was tried and acquitted, have been hacked to pieces by souvenir hunters.

The trees are two miles south of Lake Forest, Ill. Around their base, where the girl's body was found two years ago crumpled in the snow, the grass has been beaten down by the feet of the curious. Where once was pretty pasture land, dark paths cut the sod, marking the way of hundreds who have visited the place.

The Orpet trial, one of the most sensational in years, because of the tender ages of the girl and boy, attracted much attention, and many motorists from Chicago have journeyed to the site of the three oaks, trysting-place of the youthful lovers, to obtain souvenirs. The trees were gashed for chips, limbs were torn off, and even the grass about the place was taken up and carried away.

MISS DEMEANOR

By H. P. WARTMAN

"MISS DEMEANOR." So reads the sign—a simple, modest affair, quite unobtrusive to the passer-by, and yet a closer examination reveals the fact that the petite, embossed, shining letters which stand out so clearly on the delicate background are solid gold on real mother-of-pearl. The scrupulously clean marble front, the highly polished mahogany entrance, the onyx stone at the curb, could tell of many stylish equipages which halt there daily, conveying New York's fairest and wealthiest daughters to and fro. From the outside no intimation is given of the fact that a very fashionable modiste dwells and plies her trade within—a modiste who could give worthy points on fashions, frills and fancies — who controls the bon-ton dress ideas of New York's wealthy set.

He caught up his gun and rushed to the door, only to find his progress barred by two determined, grizzled faces.

She is not French, this little lady, as her name seems to imply. Many conjecture as to her nationality, but none have the front to ask her. She moves in a sphere that is purely of her own creation, so simple, so exacting in its way that none dare to overstep its border from the noblisse who suffer torture for fashion's sake to the paid employees and domestics of her household. The stranger who steps within is rather disappointed at the impression at first meeting. One might expect from such costly surroundings to see a creature clad in most bewitching garments, bedecked with jewels and the like; but not so. The modest, unassuming little woman who comes forward with such demure frankness and says simply, "I am quite ready to attend," is the direct contra of expectance; only one realizes when looking into that calm, pure face, with its delicately chiseled features, that there is a woman who might sway a kingdom. Surely age has not left its mark there.

But Miss DeMeanor neither knows nor cares for the opinions of the world at large. "Take me for what I am," she says; "nothing more nor less." And that is sufficient for most. Only at times, when a cloud gathers on the fair face and the lines of the mouth are drawn a little closer, is one reminded of a past that is not forgotten.

It is one of New York's dreary, dismal afternoons. One would wish to see a brighter aspect for Christmas eve than this heavy, murky atmosphere that envelopes the metropolis and crowds into every door and window, making four in the afternoon seem like eight at night; but there is no accounting for the weather's peculiarities, and there are many of them. So thinks Courtice Mordaunt as he walked with quickening step along Fifth avenue and wishes he were anywhere rather than where he is. The sight of a uniformed policeman, who looms up suddenly before him and awakens him from the lethargy which the dismal day has brought upon more than him, causes him to remember that he is looking for some place and does not know where to find it.

"My good fellow," he says, with such suddenness as to cause that person to stop as quickly as if his progress were barred by unseen hands, "I am looking for a Miss DeMeanor. Can you tell me——"

"It is not possible you do not know of her?" interrupts the other. "Why, sir, she is as famous as the Queen of Sheba. Number sixty-five—straight ahead—first house on the left."

Courtice quickens his gait and three minutes later is standing on the steps awaiting with some impatience the answer to his ring, which comes just ten seconds later.

No strange errand brings him here. He comes simply at the request of his charming wife, whom he loves deeply and who knows the pleasure it gives him to minister to even her smallest desires.

"Would he stop and tell Miss DeMeanor that she would prefer old gold instead of lavender on the evening gown?" —that was all.

He is ushered into the reception-room, and notes with some surprise the exquisite taste that is manifested in the arrangement and the general appearance of refinement and culture which meets his eye at every turn; but he is not given much to musing, this gentleman who is every day of forty, though he does not look it, and is rather relieved when the door opens and the lady herself comes toward him, his card in hand, and says smilingly:

"Mr. Mordaunt will please state his desire."

"I have come——" he begins, but does not finish.

Miss DeMeanor's usually tranquil face suddenly turns deathly pale; she grasps a chair-back and would fall were not Mordaunt's strong arms there to catch her. It is only for a second; with an effort she regains her composure. Quickly disengaging herself from his opportune embrace, she says:

"You will pardon me; I felt faint; it must have been the day. I—I——" but over the face of Courtice Mordaunt, too, comes a change; his countenance is suffused with the light of recognition. Struggling with suppressed emotion, he suddenly takes her hand and says quickly:

"You are not whom you seem; your name—quick—you are——"

"Margaret Herefurth," she replies sweetly. "Did you think I had forgotten you, Courtie?" Then she is in his arms and he is pouring kisses on her upturned face—kisses full of love, of rapture. For the moment they have no thought, these two, save of perfect happiness—these who were once all in all to each other as much as the laws of God and man could make them. Forgotten him? His mind goes back a score of years. He is standing at an altar beside a sweet-faced girl of eighteen; the delicate scent of the roses and evergreens still lingers. They had thought the world all flowers then; but who can foretell the future—who indeed?

They were not rich, but what mattered it? Health, love, are two great powers. Afterward, when the cry of gold had come from the West and he could not longer withstand the fever that burned in his veins, he had taken his young bride to California, as many another had done. The cabin in the rough mining-camp—crude, indeed—but almost a heaven to him filled with wifely love and affection. It had been a hard struggle, but bravely and untiringly he had toiled on, stimulated by the thought of future luxury. His labor had not been unrewarded; slowly but surely the little pile of gold which was nightly taken up and reburied in a hiding-place known only to them two, had begun to assume larger proportions. And how one day he had rushed in breathless and with an excited hug and kiss had told her their fortune was made, and exhibited a nugget that looked as big as a mountain in their happy eyes. It was by far the largest that had yet been found.

"We will begin to pack up, Margy," he had said. "We will join the first crowd for the coast"; but they had never reached it together.

That night the crisis had come. In those days of gold greed in California, the mere knowledge of its possession was sufficient to jeopardize a life. The country around the mining districts was infested with bands of lawless murderers, to whom the taking of a life represented a cash value. He remembers that awful night; how they were awakened by the clatter of many horses' hoofs, mingled with the firing of pistols and oaths from bearded throats; how he had jumped quickly to his feet, and, bidding his freightened child-wife dress and remain where she was until his return, had caught up his gun and rushed to the door, only to find his progress barred by two determined grizzled faces, which demanded his surrender and his gold, and failing to comply, he had been promptly overpowered and had sunk to the ground, stunned by the force of the blow which had felled him. Then had come a blank. How he had regained consciousness just in time to behold his dear little wife being carried off, struggling in the arms of a repulsive villain with but one eye and a visage rivaling that of satan himself; how he had heard her cry:

"Courtie, Courtie! don't leave me to a fate like this! Kill me! Kill me!" with an appealing gesture; how in his maddened frenzy he had caught up his gun and fired—not at her, but at the brute who held her—an aimless shot, after which, in his weakened condition, he had swooned again, only to awaken with the morning sun streaming in at the open door and lighting up the dismal tumbled-about surroundings.

"Margaret!" he had called; then, when there had been no answer, the horrors of the night had dawned upon him. With a painful effort he had pulled himself together. A search revealed the fact that there was scarcely nothing left intact; they might have burned the cabin with him in it, as they had done many another. Yes, the gold was there, they had not discovered it, buried as it had been, right under the fire on the hearth, which was still smouldering. He had viewed it with a mocking eye; of what use was wealth without her, his darling wife, his other self?

He remembers how he had ridden like a madman ahorse through the country, now with a posse, and now alone, scarcely caring for meat or sleep, in search of her—fruitless efforts!

How he had exhausted his hard-earned fortune in rewards and other incentives which had brought no result. After a year of misery, he had despaired of finding her, and returned to New York a broken-hearted man.

But time had been a wound-healer to Courtice Mordaunt as to others, and fifteen years had found him again a wealthy man, succeeding by the demise of an uncle whom he had never known, to Wellington Mordaunt's title and estate—no small fortune. A year ago he had met Stella Frye, a charming, winsome little woman, who learned to think the world of him, and when he had proposed a union, what reason had she for a refusal? And so it goes.

All this passed through the mind of Courtice Mordaunt as he stood looking down into the face upturned to his, in far less time than it takes to tell it. Then she, awakening to the reality of the situation, gently pushes him into a chair and tells her side of the drama. That eventful night, after reaching the camp of the outlaws, when they had all fallen asleep from sheer, elated drunkenness, she had slipped away unseen, and after days and nights of aimless wandering in the alkali desert, she had finally reached Los Angeles, weary, hungry and footsore—where Courtice had never once thought of looking for her—and obtained menial employment there until she, too, had returned to New York to eventually drift into the field in which he had at last found her. The world had no charms for her, and thinking him long since dead, as he had her, it was no wonder they had not met in the big city of which she had cared to see so little.

At last she breaks the spell. Her womanly reason has gained the ascendancy. Holding out a hand that is almost as white as the face above it, she says calmly:

"Courtie, this world was not made for us two alone. We each have thought the past dead; so let it remain. You have other ties to bind you, and I—well, I have known a score of years without you. What that has meant to me, no matter; I can return to it. And now, good-by, Courtie. With to-night I shall pass out of your life forever. It is best, dear. Can you not see it?"

Aye, he does see it. What else can he do? Has he the strength to take the life-blood from that dear heart at home? No! She is right—and with only a silent handshake that means so much to these two, he leaves her.

Christmas morning dawns on two broken hearts—two lives that have felt keen Sorrow's blade, not once, but twice. But the busy world has no time for the griefs of two—and so, who is the wiser? Who will know that one of them has committed worse than a mis-de-meanor.

HOW SUBMARINES ARE TESTED

THE problem of the submarine builder is not merely to construct a boat which will dive, but to make it strong enough to withstand the constantly increasing and tremendous pressure as it sinks. Recent reports say that many German crews have gone to their deaths in undersea craft, hastily built and sent out before being thoroughly tested, which have succumbed to the crushing weight of the water.

A dock for testing submarines, designed by an Italian, Major Laurenti, is now being used by the United States Navy, writes Robert G. Skerrett, in *Popular Science Monthly*. The test is made without risking either boat or crew in deep water.

The dock is a long steel tube, capable of resisting a pressure from within equal to that at a depth of 300 feet. One end is permanently closed, the other fitted with a watertight gate. The boat to be tested is floated into the dock, the gate made fast and then powerful pumps force water into the tube until the pressure upon the hull is as great as if the submarine were deeply submerged.

While the test is being made the crew watch closely for leaks and measure the extent to which the hull yields to the external force. They are always in communication with the officer in charge of the pumps, so may be easily rescued if an accident occurs.

TANKS MAY PLOUGH WAR-RUINED FARMS

THE usefulness of the tank, most spectacular invention of the war, may not end with the signing of peace. The great work has been suggested for it of making productive once more the shell-torn fields of Belgium and France.

In the farming regions, where hard fighting has taken place, the land has been blasted and ripped open by high explosive shells and drenched with poisonous chemicals. A number of scientists expressed the gloomy view that the topsoil had been so scattered and so much of the lower and unproductive strata brought to the surface that, added to the poisoning, many years must pass before fertility could be restored. These opinions had a serious effect; generous sums were pledged, many in America, to restore towns and villages, but few cared to contribute toward rehabilitating land hopelessly ruined.

In *Popular Mechanics* Lewis R. Freeman tells of a visit last summer to the bitterly contested fields of Flanders, the Somme, the Champagne and Verdun. These regions were covered with a luxuriant growth of wild flowers, weeds and some domestic plants, except where the soil had been stripped to bedrock. Its fertility seemed to have been increased, the result obtained by the use of dynamite in subsoil cultivation in America.

The surface was so crisscrossed with trenches and blasted into deep shell craters, however, that farming, even by powerful tractors, seemed impossible, until a Canadian officer suggested the use of tanks. Attached to tremendously strong harrows and scrapers, they may go back and forth across the fields, uprooting endless lengths of barbed wire, unexploded shells and other débris, and filling in the craters until the ground is fit to be turned over to its owners for the planting of crops.

WEATHER MAN HELPS WIN THE WAR

THOSE who keep score on the weather man say his batting average is very high, but because of an occasional miscalculation most of us consider him a fair subject for humor. This is not the case along the fighting line in France, however; there the forecaster is an important factor and military operations are largely governed by the frequent bulletins issued from the observing stations, located at short intervals from the English Channel to the Alps.

The artillery must be kept informed of changing conditions in temperature, humidity and the velocity of the winds at different levels, all of which are considered in sighting the guns for distant targets. One morning, in the early days of the war, the English batteries were ordered to resume firing at a range effective the afternoon before. The elevation of the guns was not changed, but atmospheric conditions had varied, so instead of falling on the enemy, the shells landed in the British trenches. If winter operations are planned, it is highly important to know when freezing weather, which will make the sodden roads hard enough to bear the weight of the guns, may be expected.

To the aviation service knowledge of air conditions up to a height of 20,000 feet is vital, and the old style of gas attack depended on the direction of the wind. Poisonous gas was a surprise when the Germans introduced it with such cruel effect upon the Canadians at the second battle of Ypres, so they were unhindered in their preparations. The trenches were leveled, the nozzles of the big cylinders pointed, and when the wind favored the attack was launched. Things were not so simple afterward, for a smashing bombardment followed any signs of the murderous preparations. Nowadays, shells filled with liquefied gas are used, but improved masks render it less effective.

It is important to keep weather reports from reaching the enemy. Once the London papers announced that air conditions for Zeppelins promised ideal. They neglected to add, however, that elaborate plans were being made at home, so the big airships met a hot reception on the raid which followed.

A RACE WITH A TIGER

By C. MUMFORD ROBINSON

MY father was a doctor in an English village, and having a large family, he was thankful indeed when, at the age of nineteen, a commission was obtained for me by a wealthy friend in a regiment about to sail for India.

A new motorcycle was my father's parting present, and great was my delight at finding that another young "sub" in my regiment was also a rider.

Our machines were, I believe, the first ever seen in India; and as we rode together in the town, some days after our arrival, one would have thought it was the triumphal entry of some Eastern potentate.

Our regiment was always on the move, and panics of one kind or another were very frequent on our excursions. One evening, after mess, Fred and I signed articles to ride a fifty-mile race.

There was a native road within a short distance of our camp, running away for ten miles, as flat as a drawing-board. It lay through the open plain, and then a deserted tract was reached, becoming wilder as the road proceeded, and finally swallowing it up in an impenetrable jungle. It was on this road I intended to train. Fred had found a circular path around some native huts a short way from the station, measuring about six laps to the mile, and there he prepared himself for the coming struggle.

After a week of such training as would make a modern athlete's hair stand on end, we considered ourselves fit for the contest. I was just starting for a last ride over my favorite training course, when an officer stopped me and said:

"Have you heard of the tiger, Harvie?"

"No," I answered.

"The natives have just brought word that a tiger is marked down in the jungle about ten miles from here; so don't go too far this evening."

"All right," I laughed; "I think a tiger would find it a difficult matter to catch me."

I had not seen any large wild beast as yet, and my notion of a tiger was a thin, sleepy-looking animal, such as I had once seen in a traveling menagerie.

Away I rode, my comrade's caution forgotten before I had gone a mile.

In an hour I reached my usual halting-place, ten miles from the camp; but this being the last night of my training, I made up my mind to ride another couple of miles, and then do the whole distance back at a "scorching" pace.

In another ten minutes I found myself in the jungle.

Dismounting, I oiled my machine, tightened up every screw, and then sat down on a boulder to rest and enjoy the prospect.

Above me rose the mountains, their snowy tops blushing crimson in the setting sun; here a waterfall, like a thread of gold and silver, flashing down the mountain-side and twining in and out among the masses of trees and rocks; there, a glimpse of fairyland through a jungle vista.

But night's shadows were deepening, crimson on the mountain tops had disappeared, and the snow began to look gray and ghastly. A flying fox went rustling past me, and I hastily prepared to mount; for there is scarcely any twilight in India, and I knew it would soon be dark.

As I rose my eyes encountered something which made me start and nearly drop my motorcycle.

There, not forty yards off, was a tiger. I knew the animal well enough; but how different he looked from the lean, half-starved little beast I had seen at home! He had just come into the open space from a dense jungle-brake, and sat washing his face and purring in a contented sort of way, like a huge cat.

He had not seen me yet, and I stood for another minute admiring the handsome creature, and then quietly mounted. The tiger was directly on my right, while the road stretched straight away in front of me. The noise I made roused him; he looked up, and then, after deliberately stretching himself, came leaping with long, graceful bounds over the rank grass and rocks which separated him from the road. He did not seem a bit angry, but evidently wished to get a nearer view of such an extraordinary object as I was.

Forty yards, however, I thought was quite near enough for safety. The tiger was in the road behind me now; so I pulled myself together and began to let in the gasolene.

I looked behind and saw that he was sticking to my trail. I could not judge the distance; but at any rate I was not farther from him than when we started. I rode the next half mile at a faster pace, but on again looking around, found I had not gained a yard.

The tiger was on my track, moving with a long, swinging trot, and going quite as quickly as I was.

For the first time I began to feel anxious, and thought uneasily of the ten long miles which separated me from safety.

There was no doubt about the tiger's intentions; his blood was up and on he came, occasionally giving vent to a roar which made the ground tremble. Another mile had been traversed and the brute was slowly but surely closing up. Then I tried to accelerate my speed but, to my horror, the carbureter or spark got out of order and the motorcycle refused to go any faster.

I dashed my pouch to the ground, hoping it would stop him for a few seconds; but he kept steadily on and I felt it was then grim earnest.

We were seven miles from camp now, and before I could ride another four miles my pursuer, I knew, must reach me. Oh, the agony of those minutes which seemed like long hours!

Another mile passed, then another. I could hear him behind me now, pad, pad, pad, quicker and quicker and quicker, louder and louder. I turned in my saddle for a moment and saw there were not twenty yards separating us! How enormous the brute looked, and how terrible! His huge tongue hung out, and the only sound he made was a continual hoarse growl of rage, while his eyes seemed literally to flash fire.

It was like some awful nightmare. With a shudder I bent down over the handle-bar and flew on.

The slightest slip I knew would be fatal; a sudden jolt, a screw giving, and I should be hurled to instant death. Then the machine began to slow down.

My strength would not stand much more; the prolonged strain had told upon me, and I felt all would soon be over. My breath came in thick sobs, a mist gathered before my eyes. A weight like lead was on my chest; I was choking. Then crash! with a roar like thunder the tiger was on me and I was crushed to the ground.

I heard shots fired, a babel of men's voices, and all was blank.

After many days of unconsciousness and raging fever, reason gradually returned, and I learned the particulars of my deliverance.

A party of officers had started with a shikaree (native hunter) to a trap which had been prepared for the tiger. They were talking of our coming race as they went along, and expecting every moment to meet me on my return journey. As they passed a clump of bushes I came in sight, whirling along in a cloud of dust, which hid my terrible pursuer.

They soon, however, saw my danger. The huge brute had hurled itself upon me just as we reached them.

My friends stood almost petrified with terror; but the shikaree sprang to within a yard of the tiger, and putting his rifle to the animal's ear, fired twice and blew its brains out. I was drawn from under the palpitating body of my enemy.

Making a litter of boughs they carried me into camp, where I lay for many weeks, lingering between life and death.

The tiger's skin now adorns my study, and it may be assumed that the motorcycle race never was pulled off.

BRAIN THE SEAT OF ALL PAIN

THE pain which some persons experience in an arm or leg after it has been amputated is not imaginary, because there never was any feeling in the missing member but the brain. "Our sensations," says Professor G. H. Parker of Harvard, "are not located in the peripheral parts affected, but in the central nervous system, and within that portion of it known as the cerebral cortex," the gray matter, or outer layer of the brain. If that particular section of it to which is connected the sensory nerves of the arm was removed, the hand might be plunged into boiling water without discomfort. We seem to feel pain in different parts of the body, but this is only a friendly warning from the brain to give attention to some organ where things are not going well.

In making his ardent vows, the lover should really place his hand upon his head; for, though his heart may be pounding violently, it has no feeling in the matter at all. Love is registered in the cerebral cortex, which also keeps the record we call memory, and within it originate all our hopes and fears, our most careful plans and highest aspirations. When its functions become deranged we have before us the madman.

TWO LONG-LIVED PENS

"FOR two years," announces one of those eccentric persons who make a business of collecting strange and startling facts, "Thackeray did all his writing with one pen, which also served him for writing two novels. Oliver Wendell Holmes used a gold pen for more than thirty years, during which he wrote twelve million words."

That, we may consider, is genuine pen conservation, and it may be typical of a general economy that was far more prevalent in the days of Thackeray and Holmes than it is to-day. Pens in the last quarter century have come to be rather lightly esteemed by most persons who find a continual use for them. One throws away an old pen and puts a new one in the penholder with little thought of the potential waste. A gold pen, of course, is exceptionally durable, as a rule, but the one that performed service for Doctor Holmes for more than thirty years must have been a marvel. Anyway, it was obviously a far better one than the one that served Thackeray for only two years. His was probably an old-time quill pen, but even then a quill pen that would last through the writing of two novels as extensive as those produced by Thackeray must be regarded with profound respect.

OUR SMALLEST ALLY

SAN MARINO, which is at war with Germany, is the oldest and the smallest of the world's republics. Entirely surrounded by Italian territory, it has maintained its independence for a thousand years, with but one brief break. Perched on the high rocks of the Emilian Apennines, overlooking the Adriatic, with which it is connected by a railroad to Rimini, its ancient fortresses are almost impregnable.

San Marino has, or had, an army of 100 men, and in former times it was mobilized on February 5 in honor of the national holiday. It was on that date in 1740 that the ancient republic was restored, after it had for a time been subjugated by a neighboring reigning house. The intercession of Rome brought about the restoration, so San Marino's holiday is in the nature of a religious festival.

San Marino's declaration of war against Germany was not the first instance of its defiance of a great power. The oldest document preserved by the republic is a declaration of war made in the eighth century against Charlemagne's Holy Roman Empire. Charlemagne did not take the declaration very seriously; in fact, it is said, he died without ever having heard of San Marino or its declaration of war.

San Marino gains its name from Marinus, the Roman stone mason who fled from the persecutions of Diocletian's emissaries in Rimini. With a few other Christians, he found sanctuary on Mount Titano, and there laid the foundation of the settlement which in future centuries adopted a republican form of government. After the restoration San Marino remained undisturbed by its powerful neighbors.

THE RENEGADE DETECTIVE

A Serial Story

By RANDOLPH BADGER

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE HERMIT'S CAVE

THEY all turned upon Thorn with surprise at his words and sudden appearance.

"What do you mean?" demanded Joslin haughtily.

"Oh, it is only a small case of treachery and masquerading," said Thorn.

"Sir, you insult me!" said Joslin angrily.

"Contrarily, I do you justice. You look just like Joslin himself."

Camille and Chiquita both uttered suppressed cries of affright.

"Don't!" exclaimed Camille entreatingly.

"You need not get frightened," said the detective reassuringly. "I think that I know something about this case and this fellow."

"Are you aware you are addressing a magistrate and a gentleman?" demanded Joslin.

"A magistrate—a usurper!" said Thorn contemptuously.

"This is too much!"

"Very well acted," said Thorn dryly. "You can't deceive me, however."

He walked up to Joslin and stood with folded arms directly in front of the trembling wretch and stared him square in the eye, a frown upon his brow.

"For God's sake, Splofford," gasped Joslin, "run and fetch a constable to take this madman away! I am really afraid of him."

"You fear me, eh?" said Thorn sneeringly. "I will increase it. Now, tell me," he exclaimed; "where have you concealed Ralph Desmond?"

"Ralph Desmond!" echoed Joslin blankly. "Who is he?"

"Answer me!" thundered the detective, stamping his foot passionately.

"By heavens, this man is a lunatic!" cried Joslin, retreating in alarm.

"See here," said Thorn in a milder tone, "you are playing a pretty sharp game, and I know you mean to fight hard to keep your points; but I'll run you down. Do you hear?"

"Mr. Thorn, let him be!" cried Chiquita, running up to the detective and clutching his arm. "See poor Camille; she is half dead."

The girl-wife was, in fact, as white as a ghost, and leaned heavily against the wall, with her trembling hands clasped over her heaving bosom.

"No, no!" exclaimed the officer. "Do not needlessly alarm yourself, my child. I will expose this rascal. You know him, don't you, eh? His youthful disguise is excellent, no doubt, to gull the old man upon whom he is levying; but the shaven face, the dyed hair and mustache, the altered appearance, do not deceive me. I knew Delano Joslin before this epoch of his career, and once I know my man it is hard to fool me. Joslin, or Fulton, whichever name suits you best, let me tell you something. I have discovered the Hermit's Cavern!"

"The deuce take you, sir," said Joslin, affecting ignorance. "I do not know you or your Hermit's Cavern. I wish you would get out."

But in his heart he quailed and felt a fearful dread.

"Keep up the duplicity!" said Thorn in sarcastic tone. "It will end sooner or later. Of course, I knew you would deny it. But see here; I found a State prison suit there in the cavern, beside a chain with a huge padlock on it, which had recently been oiled. You had Ralph Desmond concealed there, but have taken him away again."

"I'm sure," said Joslin to Splofford, "I don't know what that man is speaking of."

"Affect innocence! That is right. But I have you. Desmond was chained in that corner by the river-side no less than a couple of weeks ago! You have taken him away again; but I will find him."

"This house," said Joslin, "is under the protection of the law, as I have just arrested its two only inmates. Consequently, clear out."

"You shall not arrest these women!"

"You shall see. Splofford, call in the constable."

Splofford approached a window, threw open the blinds, and whistled.

A moment later the door opened, and John Rackstraw entered.

Thorn started slightly on catching sight of the rascally face of this bulky functionary, and, quickly glancing at Joslin, he noted a slight start on the other's part, a quick motion of Rackstraw to be discreet, then a tranquil look.

"Old confederates in crime," was the detective's mental soliloquy.

"What's wanted, sir?" queried Rackstraw.

"Take these two women to jail!" commanded Joslin authoritatively.

"If you lay hands on either of them, I'll pull you in, Johnny Bancroft!"

Mr. Rackstraw uttered a yell of terror, gave one wild look at the grimly smiling face of the detective, and made a rush for the door.

"The old forger remembers his alias!" exclaimed Thorn.

"Really," observed Joslin, "this is extraordinary. Rackstraw, come back."

But Rackstraw by that time was out of the house and scudding down the road as fast as his huge belly and stumpy legs would let him go.

"The cross-examination you put these women through was a farce," said Thorn.

"You shall see, sir; you shall see," said Joslin threateningly.

"H'm! Well, now, and what do you say of Rackstraw, as you call him? Did you observe how quickly he recol-

lected his proper name? Besides, I saw the signals you exchanged with him. The true version of this whole thing in a nutshell is that you are the real culprit, Joslin, and, having the husband of this poor woman in your power, you wish to sacrifice her in order to save your own neck. I see through the whole thing."

"Are you Detective Thorn?" demanded Joslin.

"That is a superfluous question; you know I am."

"Ah! Then that accounts for your wild theory. You detective fellows do all manner of strange things to gain notoriety, and I shrewdly guess that this dodge is hatched up for the same purpose. It is ridiculous."

"Oh, no! See here—do you recognize this? It is marked 'Delano Joslin,' sir."

He drew an old shoe from his pocket and held it up.

"I'd like to know what that old shoe has to do with me?"

"Then I will explain. This shoe, fits the impressions made in the garden by the man who was in the hall with Mrs. Desmond on the night of the death of Arthur Desmond."

"What has that got to do with me?"

"As I told you before, your name is on this shoe."

"Pardon me," returned the other coolly, "you said the name in it was Delano Joslin."

"Well, isn't that your name?"

"My name is Harry Fulton."

"If your name is Harry Fulton, how came this shoe in your possession?"

"I never owned that shoe."

"How strange! Why, I took it from your bedroom closet half an hour ago."

"Another trumped-up plan to implicate me, eh?"

"To prove my assertion, let me accompany you home. I only took one shoe; the other is yet in the closet where I found this one."

"Then you must have put it there. I was not in this vicinity four months ago."

"Where were you?"

"In New York."

"That is false."

"How so?"

"I saw you at the Red Shield tavern the day after the murder."

"You are mistaken, sir. If it is necessary, I can prove an alibi."

"Prepare your alibi then, for later on it will not avail you."

Joslin cast a look of indescribable hatred and fear upon the detective.

"When the time comes," he exclaimed, "I will make you suffer for these indignities."

"Bah! Your ranting is cheap. I have my eye upon you, and now get out of this house. If you molest these ladies again I will fix you."

The detective pointed to the door, and the defeated rascal slunk out, followed by the astonished notary, to whom he was forced to impart a plausible excuse and beg of him to say nothing of the occurrence.

When they had departed, Thorn cast his glance upon Jigger, who was edging toward the door in a crestfallen manner.

"See here, you!" he exclaimed, and Jigger paused. "Wait a moment. What motive is actuating you to carry on this investigation?"

"My intentions are not bad," was the sulky reply.

"Probably not; the effect, however, was atrocious."

"A man must gain his livelihood somehow."

"Undoubtedly. This business is beyond your province, though."

"That's a fact," replied Jigger. "A meaner vocation than hounding human beings in this sneaky, underhanded fashion would be hard to conceive."

"What do you do it for, then?" said Thorn, coloring up.

"To suit my own purposes. If it was somebody besides one in whom you take a strange interest that was apparently guilty, you would not be so overscrupulous about having them in prison, or die on the gallows. When it comes home to yourself, you find it a far different thing, this hounding a person to death, don't you? But you shall not evade it, if your friends are culpable any more than any of your own victims."

"That will do!" exclaimed Thorn harshly, stinging under the truth of the reproof.

"Let me have my say out."

"I wish to hear no more—you are too deceptive."

"Detectivism is unqualified deceit."

"That does not argue in your favor for your treachery!"

"My treachery? How treachery, I'd like to know?"

"This lady aided you—now you forget gratitude and try to convict her."

"Oh," said Jigger emphatically, "I, like yourself, forget all prejudices and sentiment in the face of duty. What your connection with Mrs. Desmond may have been I do not know, but I do know that in the face of it you so far forget sentiment one time as to convict her husband, and thus instigate all this trouble! Had you not proven treacherous then to your friendship, or whatever else it might have been, for this woman and her husband, she would not now have to cruelly suffer over her husband's trouble. Why didn't you abandon the case and let him go? Duty? Ah! well. It is that which now actuates me! You have done the deed of misery, and now seek to repair it or atone for it by renegading yourself. What good does this latter sentiment do? A word spoken cannot be recalled!"

James Thorn glared at the strange man a moment, then groaned aloud.

"You are right," he said bitterly. "I never had any conscience—I was pitiless, and heaven now makes me bear an atom of the agony which I never measured in my victims when I remorselessly hunted them down!"

"Well, what are you growling about, then?"

"I suppose I have no right to talk so to you, Jigger, but then you are not what you seem to be. Ever since you have been prowling about here, I noticed that you have worn a wig and a false mustache."

"Haven't I got as much right to disguise myself as you have?"

"Certainly; but, if I am not mistaken in my surmise, you have some other object in view besides discovering who killed Arthur Desmond."

"Right you are. I am playing a double rôle for a purpose of my own."

"I thought so. Take my advice, or listen to my most earnest supplication, drop this case and attend to your own business."

"Sorry I can't accommodate you, for I must pursue my investigations."

"Do you wish to make an enemy of me?"

"No, not at all. I prefer to retain your friendship. But, see here," he added, after pondering a moment. "If you will tell me what interest you have in trying to shield the murderer of Desmond, I may compromise somehow."

"That is out of the question," said Thorn sadly. "I cannot tell you."

"All right. I will push on, then, and if you mean to get ugly over it and interfere with me, I will go to extreme measures."

"Was it you who wished to have these women put in jail?"

Jigger nodded affirmatively, and said:

"I only did it to make a little test which I planned, and I knew that they would not remain incarcerated long, for I would have been the first tone to have them bailed out immediately after you were locked up!"

"I cannot divine what your object is," said Thorn, eyeing the other a moment attentively, 'but I must confess you do not seem to be very malicious."

"Why should I? Do not make any mistake about me, Thorn. When the proper time comes for me to explain my position to you, which I hope will soon occur, you will understand me better."

There was a peculiar look on his face as he said this, and then, turning to the two ladies, who had been listening attentively to all he said, he made a polite bow and glided out of the room.

Upon reaching the garden, he went among the trees and whistled softly, meantime looking around in perplexity as if in search of some one. Suddenly a small, wiry body came flying down from an upper branch of the tree over his head, and Slinking Sammy lighted in a straddle across his neck so dexterously as to knock him down. He uttered a cry of rage, and gathering himself up, he made a snatch at the grinning boy, who with but little trouble dodged out of his way by running around a bush.

"What did you do that for?" cried Jigger in exasperation.

"Hush!" said the boy in serious tones. "He may hear yer."

"Ah!" said Jigger, instantly forgetting his anger. "Is he near here?"

"After comin' out, he sent the notary away, an' went down that path."

"Toward the river," muttered Simon. "Come on, Sammy."

"Where to?"

"I think he has gone to the Hermit's Cave, and I must discover where it is located to verify what Thorn said. I'm glad I set you to watch him."

"That's the reason I climbed up in the tree; he couldn't see me there," said Sammy, trotting along beside Jigger and keeping his eyes open.

They soon reached the rank vegetation bordering the stream, and still following the path at a rapid pace, they went on for ten minutes.

Suddenly Jigger paused upon seeing the figure of Joslin walking on ahead of them, and Sammy crept close to his side.

"No noise now," he said, in low, warning tones. "He has stopped!"

Joslin stood before a huge mass of bush and moss-covered rocks, and they saw him stoop down and examine some fresh footprints on the ground, when an exclamation of anger escaped him, and he said in tones loud enough for them to hear:

"Sure enough, he has been here. No doubt he watched me coming and going."

Parting a clump of bushes, he suddenly disappeared.

"He's gone into the cave, Sammy," whispered Jigger after a moment.

"What'll we do—foller him?"

"Yes—I think it will be safe. Come on."

They crept ahead, and remaining outside, listened. They heard voices in conversation.

"Some one else's in there, too," whispered Sammy.

"So there is." was the startled rejoinder. "It's too bad I can't hear what they say."

He looked around uneasily a moment, then seemed to have made up his mind to try an experiment. Parting the bushes, he saw a dark hole in between two huge boulders. It was the cavern entrance.

"Are you a-goin' in?" asked the boy uneasily.

"I will risk discovery. What they are saying may be important."

"I'll stay out here, then," said the boy.

"You can keep a lookout for newcomers."

"Orright, sir. Go on."

While Sammy concealed himself in a dense bush, Jigger crept into the dark hole. There was a short passage of about three yards' length to be traversed, and then a sudden bend to the left. This was equal in length to the other, and when he reached the end of it he found himself at the entrance to the cave. It was a natural apartment of solid rocks, about forty feet in diameter, and contained, besides several wooden stools and a fire-place, a heap of moldy straw in a corner. A huge chain was riveted to the wall over the straw, and upon one of the stools stood a common lantern, the dim light of which illuminated the interior of the cave with ghostly effect.

Joslin sat on a stool facing John Rackstraw, the constable, and they held a State prison regulation suit between them.

"Is this where you came when he frightened you away?" asked Joslin.

"Yes," growled the fat constable unamiably. "He scared me bad."

"And thus got the best of you. Why didn't you face him out?"

"I couldn't. I ain't got such nerves as you have."

"Fool! He could not hurt you without a warrant. Besides, what is known about you around here? Nothing! Absolutely nothing."

"I didn't know what he might a-tried on me!" said Rackstraw.

"Nonsense. I gave you credit for better sense."

"So he found this place, did he? I wonder how?"

"By watching me, I suppose," replied Joslin gloomily.

"Do you think he suspects where we have put Desmond?"

"No; but doubtlessly he will try to ascertain."

"Then I must be upon my guard."

"If you blunder, both of us will go under, and I swear my stake is so high it would prove horrible for me."

"You can rely upon me the same as in old New York days."

"I know it, Johnny. This prison suit told the tale to Thorn."

"How did it get in here?"

"Why, I made Desmond strip, after I caught him by writing him a note purporting to have come from his wife to meet her here; and taking the suit off from under the disguise he wore, he threw it on the floor, and I did not think to destroy it, never dreaming that Thorn would come here and find me out. We must be upon our guard now."

"Of course. But tell me, how did Desmond reach the Red Shield?"

"When he escaped from Sing Sing, the official who was bribed to release him met two strolling vagabonds, who chanced to be passing the place where the prisoner was concealed. One was Simon Jigger——"

"Ah—the tramp wot give me so much trouble some time back?"

"The same. Thinking it would be a safe plan to intrust the prisoner to their care, in order to evade recapture, Jigger was bribed, without telling him who the man was, to accompany him to this location, which he did."

Mr. Jigger started so suddenly, so great was his sur-

prise to learn who his former companion was, that he made a loud noise.

Hearing it, the two men sprang to their feet in alarm, and so great was Jigger's trepidation and desire to escape, that he made more noise, and they saw him, and had him in their clutches in a moment.

"Ha!" exclaimed Joslin. "A spy!"

"Let me go!" exclaimed the detective, struggling to free himself.

"So you have played the eavesdropper, eh?" demanded Joslin, clutching the unhappy Jigger tightly by the back of the neck and holding him fast.

"Hey, Sammy!" yelled Jigger. "Help—help!"

"Cry out, you sneak—it will do you no good!"

"I will have you arrested!" cried Jigger furiously.

"Do so at your peril!"

"What do you mean?" queried Jigger uneasily.

"I mean this," was the fierce rejoinder. "If you betray what you just overheard, I will charge you with aiding a State prisoner to escape."

"Oh, heavens!" gasped Jigger in consternation.

At this moment Sammy rushed in. He held a club in his hand.

"Let him go!" he screeched. "Let Jigger go, or I'll brain you!"

"Secure that whelp, Rackstraw!" said Joslin, in furious tones.

The constable rushed upon the boy, and despite the fact that Sammy dealt him several stunning blows upon his thick skull, he finally overpowered him.

"Well," said Jigger, upon seeing how helpless they were, "now you have us. What'll you do next?"

"You shall see. Rackstraw, take them to jail. I will try them to-morrow for vagrancy, and get them out of our way for six months."

(*To be continued*)

MONKEY CANNOT MASTER USE OF FINGERS

WHEN next you go to the zoo, watch the monkeys use their hands. Notice how they seize things with their fists. They do not use their finger-ends as we do. While the higher monkeys, such as gorillas and chimpanzees, may be taught to use their fingers, they never learn to use them as easily as do human beings.

The monkey is primarily a tree-dweller, says *Popular Science Monthly* by way of explanation. It lives in forests and swings from tree to tree, using its hands as hooks with which it grasps the branches. The thumb is not brought into play. Some South American monkeys have lost the thumb through disuse; all that is left of it is indicated by a little lump under the skin.

In the higher monkeys the wrist is built like yours. It has the same number of bones. But the monkey has never used his wrist, and so it has lost its flexibility. The monkey can use its feet to better advantage than its hands.

Man, on the other hand, has used his feet so long simply for the purpose of walking that he would experience considerable difficulty in using them as he uses his hands. Yet it is amazing how quickly a man can learn to use his toes as he does his fingers. If you don't believe this, just try to write with your toes. At first the letters will be very large and awkward. But with a little practise you will find that you can write with your foot more easily than with your left hand, if you are naturally right-handed. It is an attractive exercise with which to while away an hour. We know you will try the experiment.

SAWDUST NOT VALUABLE

AMONG other economies brought forward by the war is the increasing use of sawdust. Not only have many uses been found for waste sawdust, but it is being manufactured commercially.

If one enters the sample room of the modern manufacturer of sawdust he will observe on shelves rows of glass jars, stoppered and standing mouth downward. There are reds of different shades, browns and yellows, to say nothing of the blacks and whites. In these finer forms sawdust is made of perhaps sixty different woods of various degrees of fineness for a variety of purposes.

Sawdust, combined with oil, is put up in packages for use in sweeping carpets, instead of the old-time scattered tea-leaves. Sawdust from various non-resinous woods is employed in the smoking of meats, and sawdust in the form of pulp is used in the manufacture of dynamite.

In combination with cement, sawdusts of various kinds and colors are used in the construction of special flooring, such as that used in hospitals. Such flooring, made with the material in a plastic state, can be laid out in a single piece, without cracks or joints, and so made germproof. It is furthermore "silent" and easier to tread than tile.

Some curious uses are found for the better kinds of sawdust. One of these pertains to the Spanish cedar sawdust, which is of extreme lightness. It is employed for packing cheap chemicals contained in glass and shipped for long distances.

Manufactured satinwood sawdust is employed in the preparation of pastel boards for drawing purposes. Sawdust of brierwood is reworked for special uses. Lignum-vitæ sawdust is put to some chemical uses.

The heaviest sawdust is that obtained from ebony. It is black in color, although there are traces of tiny white fibers.

Holly furnishes the whitest of sawdust. This is made into a very fine pulp form, is used for floor material, and enters into the composition of certain grades of wall-paper.

There is a manufactured sawdust called "lemon," which is not derived from the wood of the lemon-tree, but gets it name from its color.

A great many houses are partially constructed of sawdust, as in the instance of a form of brick made from this valuable by-product. Mortar containing a large quantity of sawdust and a sort of stucco is now being made entirely of sawdust.

Sawdust is also pressed into various forms and objects and finished in good imitation of oak, rosewood, mahogany and other high-priced woods. A very fair grade of linoleum is made of a composition into which sawdust enters. The uses of sawdust are almost innumerable—it is employed in making gas of various kinds, pressed into stoppers for bottles, used in laundries in place of soap and employed in the making of dyes.

CURRENT NEWS

LAMPS FROM OLD VASES

Don't discard your vases when you tire of seeing them about the house. If your home is lighted with electricity, it is an easy matter to turn them into table lamps, says the *Illustrated World*. Electrical supply houses are selling sets of bulbs, sockets and wires ready to be fitted into the opening of the vase. An attractive wicker or bamboo shade, covered with cloth, may be purchased at a low price. A small amount of sand or lead should be placed in the bottom of the vase to keep it steady.

WILD BRONCOS SENT

There should be plenty of bucking and pitching of broncos along the western front in Europe now, as 31,000 absolutely wild Canadian horses have arrived in Europe, according to Clyde Dunlap, of Virginia, Minn., horse wrangler, who returned recently from the Canadian Northwest, where for twenty-one months he had been roping the animals. He said most of the horses were captured in the wilds of the Peace River country, northwest of Edmonton, and none of them has ever looked through a bridle.

WOMEN JURORS FIFTY YEARS AGO

Women acted as jurors in America almost half a century ago. The first Grand Jury which included members of the "weaker" sex was impaneled at Laramie, Wyo., forty-eight years ago. The Territory of Wyoming was organized in 1868 out of parts of Dakota, Utah and Idaho, and one of the first official acts of the new Territorial Government was to grant women the right to vote and hold office. Wyoming thus ranks as the first of the States to give them full suffrage upon equal terms with men.

CONDENSED BUTTERMILK

A plant for condensing buttermilk has been established at Grand Forks, N. D., and during this year will use 6,000,000 pounds of buttermilk, making 35,000 barrels of the condensed article. This is part of a chain of buttermilk condensing plants projected for that section, and after the product has been introduced for baking and other commercial uses it will be put up in small jars for family use. Barreled condensed buttermilk is also packed for hog-feeding. Malted buttermilk is said to be a satisfactory soda-fountain drink.

ROOF SUSPENDS WALLS

One of the queerest structures in the world is an electric station building at Cristobal, in the Panama Canal Zone, says *Popular Science Monthly*. The roof is supported by powerful central columns, and the side walls bear no weight whatsoever, but are suspended from the eaves by means of cantilever beams. On one side of the building the wall is made fast to the foundation with anchor bolts. This unique construction was adopted to prevent the building from settling at a dangerous angle should an earthquake tremor shift the foundation.

PAIR LIVED ON $12 A MONTH

W. J. Daniel, city humane officer of Muncie, Ind., in his rounds recently discovered an aged man and wife, the former eighty-five years old and the latter seventy-eight, who live on an income of $12 a month, which comes to them in the form of a pension. Out of this sum they must pay rent. The man is a veteran of the Civil War. The two said that until prices of necessaries became so high they managed to get along fairly well, but that now they have much difficulty in existing. The humane officer saw to it that they were provided with coal and proper clothing and food. They have no near relatives.

GIVES SELF TO ARMY

"Greater love hath no man than this—that he lay down his life for his friend."

When Oscar Weber, a young farmer of Pana, Ill., stepped into the line of drafted men, replacing his friend Harry Holbert, he probably figured that he would give his life for his friend's advantage.

He had learned that Holbert was being taken away, leaving a young wife and business interests that were not adjusted. He asked to be allowed to go in Holbert's place. Holbert consented and the draft board acquiesced.

THUNDER AND ARTILLERY

Recent thunderstorms have suggested some interesting comparisons with the din of battle to the disadvantage of nature. "The artillery of the skies," it would appear, plays only a poor second.

According to the opinion of an officer who has been "out there," it would take half a dozen of the loudest thunderclaps combined to make a decent imitation of the ear-splitting noise of action.

How the human tympanum endures the racket at all is another miracle of the campaign.

SMITHS LEAD IN THE ARMY ROSTER

The army has more than 100,000 Smiths. There are 1,500 Williams Smiths, 1,000 John Smiths and 200 John A. Smiths. It has 15,000 Millers, 1,500 Wilsons, and 262 John J. O'Briens, of whom 50 have wives named Mary. There are 1,000 John Browns, 1,200 John Johnsons and 1,040 George Millers.

These figures on identical names were cited the other day by the Bureau of War Risk Insurance as a reason why applicants for government soldiers' insurance, or for allotment and allowance payments should sign their full name rather than initials only.

PASTOR'S HENS ALL LAYING

The Reverend C. B. Dennison, pastor of the Methodist Church at White, S. D., was interested in reading recently of egg production. One concerned a flock of 24 hens at Janesville which laid 248 dozen eggs in 1917, and the other told of a North Dakota flock of 35 which laid 395 dozen eggs the same year. The pastor says:

"I had a flock of 16 hens which laid 191 dozen eggs in 1917. The flock of 24 laid an average of 124 per hen; the flock of 35 produced an average of 135. My flock of 16 laid an average of 143 to the hen. This also is an 'honest to goodness' count. My fowls are Rhode Island Reds."

CHILDREN WALK 22 MILES A DAY

Rollin and Dorothy Bush, of Locust Ridge, Monroe County, Pa., are said to be two children who do not count the cost when it comes to obtaining an education. Rollin is a student at the local high-school, and walks seven miles each day. His sister has to walk four miles in order to reach school. She has missed only six days the past winter in spite of the severe weather.

LOSES TEETH

J. W. Bickmore, of Clovis, Cal., attempted to separate two horses which were engaged in a kicking duel, and one of them kicked him in the mouth.

Two of his teeth were knocked out, and for a time it was feared he might suffer from lockjaw. Physicians said later, however, that there was little danger from this disease.

Mr. Bickmore was riding a horse when he met a vicious stray which, without any provocation, kicked his mount in the side. Mr. Bickmore's steed retaliated, and it was then that Mr. Bickmore dismounted and rushed between the infuriated combatants.

A TELLTALE ECHO

In Shipley Church, Sussex, England, there was formerly an echo which repeated sound twenty-one times. The most remarkable of all multiple echoes was that of the Simonetta Palace, near Milan, which repeated the sound of a pistol-shot fifty or sixty times, says *Popular Science Monthly*. In the cathedral at Girgenti, Sicily, it is possible to hear on the high altar remarks in an undertone made at a place near the main entrance, a hundred feet distant. A confessional was once indiscreetly placed at this spot, and the discoverer of the echo is said to have amused himself by listening to the confessions of many fair penitents.

RECLUSE HAD FORTUNE

Relatives of Eliza Jane Maffett, octogenarian spinster, who lived in seclution in an old house near the center of the down-town district of Pittsburg, Pa., for years, recently found a fortune in gold and silver hidden in the aged woman's home when they went in to clean after she had been taken to a hospital.

Forty thousand dollars was found concealed in various parts of the house, with bankbooks showing she had nearly $100,000 on deposit in local banks. The old woman was very eccentric, and refused to accept aid from relatives, though she was thought to be in poor circumstances. She was found unconscious from fumes of a gas-stove.

WAR DEMAND FOR SHODDY

The process of reclaiming wool from all sorts of rags has become a task of increasing magnitude since the placing of the government's big orders for army clothing, special machinery being employed to reduce the rags to shreds, wash them, separate the wool from the cotton, etc. Cloth experts claim that this reworked wool, or shoddy, is suitable for use in overcoats, because a warmer, more closely woven fabric can be produced, if used in the right proportion with virgin wool, says *Popular Mechanics*. For this reason it is used in army overcoating, but all other uniform cloth is now pure wool, according to government officials.

CATS BLAMED FOR FIRES

In spite of the fact that many people are fond of cats, a number of charges are made against this unresponsive domestic animal. It has been pointed out that they are carriers of disease germs and enemies of birdlife, in addition to the old allegation that they draw the breath of infants from the latter's lungs.

A new count has been added to the indictment. Cats may have been responsible for fires supposed to be incendiary or due to spontaneous combustion. It is well known that friction will generate electricity in a cat's fur, and, according to a recently published statement, this electricity is capable of igniting illuminating gas.

IN BED 15 YEARS

An accident recently revealed that a woman who has lain in bed fifteen years has nothing physically ailing her. She is Miss Alice Hundle, of Alton, Ill., former postmistress at Hamburg, Ill. She refuses to say why she has taken such a long rest, and physicians are puzzled at her attitude. The discovery of her real condition came about after the fall of her mother, Mrs. Henrietta Hundle, eighty-five years old, whose hip was fractured. When doctors ordered her to the hospital, her daughter had to go also, since the mother had been the sole attendant of the daughter. Physicians say that the woman is healthy and can regain her strength as soon as she is able to walk again.

ALL WANT PIANO

Ignoring the relatives, George L. Fisher, a prominent musician who died in Harrisburg, Pa., in his will directed that his estate, valued at $75,000, be invested and reinvested till its value reaches $150,000, when it is to be used for establishing an old men's home.

Fisher owned a valuable grand piano. In his will he directed that this instrument and hundreds of dollars' worth of music be given to "any deserving young person who will appreciate them."

The announcement of the piano disposition became public in the afternoon, and by evening the executor had received the names of many "deserving persons" who would appreciate a grand piano.

PRINTED BY HAND

After several years of laborious work accomplished at odd moments, a Montreal man has completed a pen-printed Bible. The task was begun in 1894, and concluded a short time ago, says *Popular Mechanics*. One thousand nine hundred and eighty-seven gilt-edged pages are contained in the leather-bound volume which is 12½ by 10 by 4 inches in dimensions. It is a rather interesting fact also that the book bears silent evidence of the world war. More than half of it was unfinished in August, 1914. War conditions thereafter made it impossible to obtain paper of the same quality as that previously used. Therefore the last part of the book is on stock paper that has a slight yellowish tinge.

WILD DUCK WITH BAND

J. W. Johnson, who had been hunting at Bullards Station, Ga., for several days, brought back a right foot of a Mallard hen duck bearing a steel ring, which was one of the ducks that he killed. He cannot account for the ring on the wild duck's leg, and is seeking an explanation.

While hunting, Mr. Johnson says he killed six wild geese and seventeen Mallard ducks.

As to the steel ring, Henry Merkel offers a possible explanation. Mr. Merkel says that he recalls a story in a magazine some time ago to the effect that the government had released a number of ducks with steel rings on their legs and asking for a report from those who killed the birds, showing where they were killed.

THE ENDLESS CHAIN PEST

The first of the "endless chain" schemes that have proved such an annoyance to postal officials in all countries was launched nineteen years ago, in 1898, by a young girl, Natalie Schenck, of Babylon, L. I. Her project was purely benevolent and was animated by a spirit of patriotism. Desiring to raise a fund for the aid of American soldiers then fighting Spain, she originated the "endless chain" idea as an adaptation of a scheme that had a vogue in England until it was stopped by act of Parliament.

The "chain" was started with four letters written by Miss Schenck to as many girl friends. Each was asked to contribute ten cents and write four similar letters to other friends. A few days later the Babylon post-office began to get busy, and as the days went by the postal officials got busier and busier until they were fairly buried under the weight of mail which descended upon them like an avalanche.

A hurry-call went to Washington for extra help, and mail was delivered to Miss Schenck by the truck-load. Now, that young lady began to feel the effects of the scheme. Her home was littered from cellar to garret with letters, letters and more letters, all containing dimes.

Before the thing "died out" of its own accord, she had received more than a quarter of a million dimes. Fakirs all over the world heard of it, and, as fakirs will, they immediately got busy. Hundreds of thousands of people were swindled out of money in this manner, until the postal authorities put an end to it.

The famous "endless chain" prayer which threatens endless punishment to any person who breaks it, has been one of the hardiest survivors of all.

EMPEROR TRAVELS IN ARMORED TRAIN

The train of Emperor William has seven partly armored cars and a locomotive designed to withstand even bomb and shell attacks. Everything that makes for efficiency is provided, including a library car, on the walls of which hang hundreds of military maps, notes the *Railway Age Gazette*.

The special train that the Czar of Russia used to travel in with its twelve cars providing apartments for the Czar, his suite and guard, a real Russian bath, kitchens, a chapel and all the comforts of a palace, was formerly the most elaborate owned by any European ruler.

The train of the President of the French Republic, although not the most luxurious of the official trains of Europe, has perhaps the most interesting history of them all. It has figured in more important political events than any of the others, and has carried at some time nearly all of the great men of the world.

President Faure ordered the train hurriedly built in the autumn of 1896 for the purpose of carrying to Paris the Czar of Russia, whose visit at that time cemented the alliance between France and Russia. The whole train was built in thirteen days. So hastily was the private personal car built that not until the tenth day did it occur to any one that the Czar might wish to take a bath. So the roof of the car was promptly cut open and a space made large enough to allow the lowering of a huge silver bath tub into a corner of the car. The tub is there after all these years, and so is the patch in the car roof. The train has its own special shed at Villeneuve St. Georges, some miles out of Paris.

One of its most important trips since the war began occurred in October, 1915, when it conveyed the King of England to the French front, where he reviewed in company with President Poincare 50,000 of the troops that had taken part in the battle of Champagne.

Unlike the imperial trains, the French President's train is not armored and it has no protection whatever against bullets and shells. It was built at a time when no one thought that necessary. The four cars are elaborately upholstered in red and yellow silk velvet and are of wood.

IN THE FIELD OF SCIENCE

A decade or two ago it began to be reported that the land along the Rhine was producing a race of men surpassing all others in science and invention.

"How about this?" demanded the old-line American, who believed the honors belonged to his own country. "Didn't Morse invent the telegraph and Bell the telephone?"

"That's true," was the reply, "but the Germans have done everything else; they say so themselves."

Now turn to the encyclopedia. In war, where the Kaiser's subjects should lead, these Americans have blazed the way: Hall, first practical breechloader; Colt, revolver and repeater; Gatling, the machine gun, and Sir Hiram Maxim, born in Maine, the automatic quickfirer. Fulton put the first engine into a warship, showed what the torpedo would do and built a submarine. Drebelle, a Hollander, worked on the undersea boat; Bushnell, American, was another pioneer, and our Holland shared with the French the honor of making them work. In England, Whitehead invented the self-propelled torpedo, and Shrapnel that deadly projectile which bears his name. France used ironclads in the Crimean War, and Ericsson built the first turret ship.

Watt and Newcomen, English, made true the dream of a steam engine, while Stephenson was acclaimed father of the locomotive. Fellow countrymen had invented spinning machinery, the thresher and the turbine engine. In America the list showed: Whitney, the cotton gin; Westinghouse, the airbrake; McCormick, the reaper; the Hoes, modern printing press.

Morton, Boston dentist, first used ether in an operation, while for England these names appear: Harvey discovered circulation of the blood; Jenner, vaccination; Lister, antiseptic surgery. Pasteur, the great Frenchman, showed the relation between micro-organisms and disease. Cugnot made the first successful automobile; Lenoir, gas engine; Daguerre, photographs. For Edison these triumphs are listed: Phonograph and moving pictures, the incandescent electric light, besides wonders in telegraphy.

In 1899 a brilliant Italian, Marconi, thrilled the world with his wireless telegraph, and four years later the Wright brothers crowned the work of many experimenters in the aviation field.

To make the story short, Kaiser Wilhelm & Co. put it over. A doleful cry arose: England was decadent, France was slipping and the old-line American had disappeared, succeeded by a variety which blushed for its country and saw salvation only in remodeling along German lines.

Then came August, 1914. The boasted schools of the Fatherland had produced a nation of 67,000,000, which allowed, with scarcely a protest, an autocratic master to order them into war. Slowly the fog cleared away. The Germans had accomplished much, but chiefly along lines marked out by men of other races.

Writing of our period, the future historian might well end an interesting chapter with these words: "The war showed the Teutonic people were not of superior mentality, but an examination of their methods is recommended to all students of publicity; they afford a striking proof that advertising pays."

BEAVERS USE SCARECROW

Farmers living along the Walla Walla River, Wash., are again being bothered by beavers, which have increased in numbers to a great extent in the past ten years, and their dams frequently interfere with irrigation projects and flood farming lands.

W. H. Gross, living near Whitman Station, complained to the game authorities that a beaver dam has shut off his irrigation supply and it is probable the dam will be dynamited.

Mr. Gross erected a scarecrow to frighten the animals away when they started building the dam. The first night the beavers did not work, but the second night they cut down the scarecrow and used it in the dam.

ARTILLERY FOR SHOOTING CANARIES

During some recent mining operations beneath the German trenches, some canaries were, as usual, taken into the excavation to indicate the presence of noxious gases, reports *Popular Science Monthly*. One of these little songsters escaped and flew to the middle of No Man's Land, where he perched on a shrub and began to sing. Fearful that the Germans would notice him and so discover that mining operations were going on, the British opened fire on him, but he seemed to bear a charmed life. The sharpshooters tried to "get" him, and the rank and file took pot-shots at him, but still the liquid notes flowed over the landscape. Finally in desperation he was fired on with trench guns, and a well-placed shell obliterated bird and bush and song.

BEATING RECORD OF PHARAOH.

The Government Fisheries Bureau is planting Gatun Lake with fishes. The first shipment for the purpose, made by steamer the other day, consisted of catfish, sunfish, carp and black bass, all of "fingerling" size. The bass were planted in the Chicago River, the principal tributary of the lake.

A Pharaoh of the twelfth dynasty constructed a reservoir (known to-day as Lake Moeris) which covered sixty-three square miles. It was an artificial lake, regarded in its day as one of the wonders of the world, and was designed to regulate the flow of the Nile.

In its way it was the most remarkable engineering achievement of antiquity. But Gatun Lake, on the line of the Panama Canal, beats it, being about three times as big. Its object is similar; namely, to take care of the flood waters of the Chagres River and prevent them from doing mischief, we are told by the *Public Ledger*.

Gatun Lake is the largest artificial body of water ever known in the world. It is, in fact, the most important feature of the transisthmian canal, extending two-thirds of the distance from the Caribbean Sea to the Pacific Ocean.

It occupies a basin that was dry land before the canal was built; and, because the area covered by it is very hilly and topographically irregular, it stretches in a multitude of arms far into its marshy shores.

One reason why its shores are marshy is that in its shallows there develops with astonishing luxuriance a kind of grass which sends out runners in all directions.

DOES RED ANGER A BULL?

It is very doubtful if a red flag really makes a bull more excited, or angers him more quickly than a rag of any other color, or any other object which the bull can see plainly, but does not understand. Conceding for the moment that red excites a bull more than any other color, the answer to the question will be found in the statement that anything unusual which the bull sees has a tendency to make him angry, and the thing which he can see at a distance more quickly will start him going most quickly, says the *Book of Wonders*. He can see a red rag better perhaps than almost any other color. There may be something about the color which excites him just as some notes on the piano will worry some dogs, but there is no way of studying the bull's anatomy to determine why red should excite him more than any other color, if that is so.

THIS SCRAP OF PAPER BROUGHT $50,000

In the Japanase city of Matsue, Izumo Province, there lived until recently an industrious maker of clogs named Jisuke Nishitani. His family had possessed for unknown generations a quaint manuscript on vellum, the origin of which which was unknown. It occurred to the owner that the parchment might have value. He first submitted it to the Tokyo Imperial University, where it was pronounced a sacred Buddhistic writing of the thirteenth century. Jisuke was advised to take it to the Nichiren Sect College, where he was informed that it was an original manuscript by Nichiren (1222-1282), founder of the Hokke sect, and was done by his own hand when thirty-eight years old. It was pronounced so valuable that its price was conservatively estimated at $50,000.

The latest but by no means least important of the Japanese sects of Buddhism was founded by Nichiren, and bears his name.

MOUSE SPINS THREAD AND RUNS 362 MILES

A thrifty Scotchman, David Hutton, conceived the idea of using mouse-power commercially. He experimented and found that a mouse will run on an average of ten and one-half miles a day.

One mouse in Mr. Hutton's collection actually ran eighteen miles in one day. The power of a mouse is not much when compared to horse-power; yet, it is enough to spin cotton thread.

The cost of a mouse upkeep is not very high. One mouse was kept in fine working condition for thirty-five days on one halfpenny's worth of oatmeal. During those thirty-five days that mouse ran 362 miles.

Mr. Hutton built a thread mill for his mice which was so constructed that the mouse was able to twist and reel from 100 to 220 threads a day. The mouse ran ten and a half miles every other day.

Two mice were kept constantly engaged in the spinning of thread for more than a year.

SCALES FOR ORNAMENTS

That the war has helped to reveal many strange economies is emphasized by the observation of a scientific writer, who has this to say:

"The scales of fish, which are of utility to the owner during its sojourn in the deep, are ignored after capture as good only for the refuse heap. But it was not ever thus. In days gone by fish scales possessed a real value, notably those of roach, bleak, dace and whitebait.

"Older writers tell us how the scales of these fishes were collected and used in the manufacture of necklaces, earrings and suchlike ornament. Thames fishermen used to catch fish, take off the scales and throw the body back into the river. A pigment was obtained by treating the scales in a certain fashion, whitebait being the most popular fish used for the purpose. So great formerly was the demand at times that the price of a quart of fish scales varied from one to five guineas.

"This treatment of fish scales for making small personal adornments is attributed to the French."

September Morn Ring—Free

The beautiful raised figure of the young girl is a wonderful reproduction in metal of the original painting. The background is hard enameled in two colors to represent sea and sky. Ring is made of "Everbright Silver" warranted five years. We send it, your correct size, for only 12c to help pay advertising.
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Then stop harmful drugging; do not follow any starvation plan or tedious exercising, but adopt the delightful home method.

Stand by your window or in the open air each morning and evening, taking ten long, deep breaths. Inhale through the nose with the mouth closed; exhale with the mouth open. Take oil of korein four times daily and follow the other simple directions that come with it.

You will positively reduce your weight, or you will receive a forfeiture in cash. Go to the drug store and get some oil of korein to-day, or write Korein Company, NC-101, Station F, New York, N. Y., for free book "Reduce Weight Happily." The guarantee is absolute.

Learn Movie Acting!

A fascinating profession that pays big. Would you like to know if you are adapted to this work? Send 10c. for our **Twelve-Hour Talent Tester or Key to Movie Acting Aptitude**, and find whether or not you are suited to take up Movie Acting. Instructive and valuable. Send dime or stamps today. Interesting, Illustrated Booklet on Movie Acting included FREE! **Film Information Bureau, Dept 8, Jackson, Mich.**

CIGARETTE HABIT Causes nervousness, ruins eyesight, often leads to kidney, and heart disorders, loss of memory, weak will, suicidal tendencies, weakens will power, confuses brain, induces headaches, loss of manly vigor & shortens life. Let me send you my **Book! It is FREE.** Tells the secret of easily conquering the habit and the same time gaining all the solace ever given by smoking. Address: **EDW. J. WOODS, WK 101, Station F, New York, N.Y.**

$1 00 PANTS MADE TO MEASURE

Not $1.00, not even 50c, not one cent cost to you under our easy conditions. **No extra charges** for extra big, extreme peg-tops, fancy belt loops, pearl buttons, no extra charge for anything, all free. Before you take another order, before you buy a suit or pants, get our samples and new offer. Write and say *"Send Me Your Offer"* the big, new different tailoring deal. Costs nothing and no extra charges.

KNICKERBOCKER TAILORING CO.
Dept. 678 Chicago, Ill.

How to Darken Your Hair

If you wish to look young and to maintain an attractive personality, do not allow your dark hair to become or to remain gray. You need make no experiments. An efficacious, easy-to-apply method is available. It is known as Koskott No. 4, and we offer it in powder form, ready for you to put in water and use occasionally to make your hair beautifully dark, and keep it so. Safe and reliable. Defies detection. Your friends will be pleasantly surprised in seeing you apparently become younger. You'll naturally become more cheerful and lithesome under the happy psychological influence of beautiful dark hair. Send only 17 three-cent stamps (51 cents), to KOSKOTT LABORATORY, 146 East 32d Street, LA-101, New York, N. Y. Satisfaction fully guaranteed.

STOLEN

In the olden days there were robbers, too. Here's a scene which covers a Bible narrative. This man was **attacked** and his property—even his clothing—**stolen.** Tell, if you can, to what incident this picture refers. A few words will do. In your letter enclose four 3c stamps for one **Mending Marvel,** or 20c (silver or stamps) for a double packet, postpaid. We want you to earn a **BIG REWARD** in the **$10.00 Reward Offer** that we shall send you with eight more pictures. MENDING MARVEL is **valuable to everybody** in the home. A convenience and money saver. Answer this and be **delighted** with what comes to you. Satisfaction guaranteed or remittance, including postage, returned to you. This is our **Big Happiness Surprise** for all—young or old. *Address*

ALBRO SOCIETY, Inc., AA-101, Station F, NEW YORK, N.Y.

Reward to you

How Drunkards are Being Saved

These 18 Pictures tell their own Story. Even a Child can understand Them.

CONQUER DRINK HABIT IN 72 HOURS!

Any drinker may completely **lose the craving** for alcoholic drinks if he or she willingly takes my gentle, **safe home Remedy** for only three days. GUARANTEE GIVEN. It is perfectly harmless, overcomes the craving and wonderfully improves the health. By my A Method **you can save yourself or another person.** The craving begins to disappear in a few hours and the health improves every minute! **An astonishing and lasting transformation!** Also, I supply my B Method whereby the **DRUNKARD MAY BE SAVED WITHOUT HIS KNOWLEDGE** safely and speedily. The person **SOON BEGINS TO DETEST SMELL OR TASTE OF LIQUOR** despises the stuff, and nothing can induce him to drink it. Any wife, mother or friend can give these preparations secretly in coffee, tea, milk, whisky, beer or other drink. They are tasteless and often truly *wonderful* in their action. Do not confuse them with numerous worthless things that are being advertised.

My Book *Confessions of an Alcohol Slave* tells how I was a heavy drinker for many years and was marvelously freed from the drink habit; it explains how the same joy can come to every other drinker. My Method is the most successful in the world. It is the lowest priced **Treatment, with GUARANTEE.** Often succeeds after all others fail. **Legions of testimonials** from persons willing to have their names and addresses published, so you can call on or write to them. **I will send my book,** in plain wrapper, postpaid, **absolutely free.** Write for it, no matter how long person has been a drinker or how much he drinks. **Correspondence strictly confidential.** I can answer as well by mail as if you call. **Write** today if you can; keep this adv. and show others in need of this joyful news.

FREE

EDWARD J. WOODS, WK 101, Station F, New York, N. Y.

NOTICE.—Woods' Method for conquering drink habit, is endorsed by physicians and experts of America and Europe as the quickest, best, perfectly safe remedy. Mr. Woods' Free Book often changes despair to joy!

Summer Dangers of Fat People

Liability to Collapse, Heart Failure, Sunstroke, Apoplexy and Other Serious Ailments

Why continue to suffer with summer heat because you are bloated with fat? Apart from the unsightliness and discomfort, you are risking your life.

If you are overstout you should determine right now that you will take off ten to sixty pounds—whatever you need to—and become normal in size with the benefit of better health, a cheerful disposition, attractive appearance and the joy of knowing that you have conquered a great victory in a comparatively easy manner.

Eat all you need; don't take tedious exercise or sickening medicines, but go to the drug store and get a small box of oil of korein (in capsules); then take one at each mealtime and one when going to bed; also follow the simple rules that come with the box. Or you may obtain a free book on weight reduction, which will come to you in a plain envelope, by writing Korein Company, NB-101, Station F, New York, N. Y.

A reduction averaging one pound daily is often reported by this system, while in obstinate cases the fat does not disintegrate so rapidly. A guarantee of $100 is offered that the use of oil of korein and observance of certain simple rules will reduce your weight ten to sixty pounds—just whatever is necessary to bring you down to a good figure. Make this a happy summer. Surprise and delight yourself and your friends!

YOUR Free Suit

Take this fine Made-to-Measure Suit and don't pay us one cent for it.

We want you to get one of our high-class suits, absolutely **Free**, so you can show it to your friends. It will be a big advertisement for us. If you have a little spare time, you can easily make from

$35 to $50 EXTRA EVERY WEEK

and **besides** that be the best-dressed man in your town. It's an opportunity you cannot afford to overlook. Don't delay a minute.

Quality and Fit Guaranteed

Write for this Big Offer at Once

Drop us a line or send us your name on a postal card and we will send you absolutely **Free**, our wonderful style book, containing dozens of samples and fashion plates to choose from. **Write Now.** Everything sent **Free** and **postage prepaid.**

THE PROGRESS TAILORING CO.
Dept. 374 CHICAGO

I WAS BALD

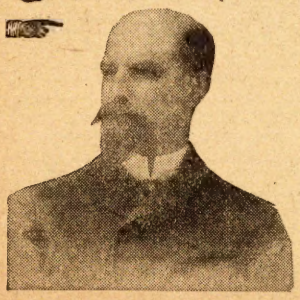
AFFIDAVIT re HAIR GROWTH

While completely bald on the top of my head as shown in my photograph which accompanying this affidavit, I adopted a hair cosmetic and formula given me by an old Cherokee Indian. Within six months my head was covered with a new and luxuriant growth of hair. I now supply Ko-tal-ko, a pomade prepared according to the original formula which resulted in my own hair growth. The statements in my advertisement are true and my photographs are correct.

John Hart Brittain

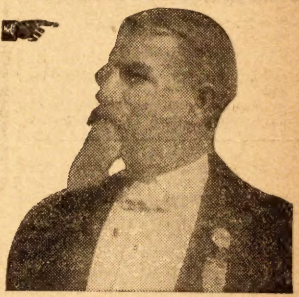
Personally appeared before me, John Hart Brittain, this fifth day of June, 1917, who signed the foregoing in my presence and who being duly sworn, attested that same is true.

John Klein
Notary Public



From former photograph of J. H. Brittain

FULL HAIR GROWTH NOW



From recent photograph of J. H. Brittain

In early manhood I was troubled with dandruff and my hair began to fall out.

Being naturally proud—call it vanity if you will—I used one hair tonic, lotion, etc., after another, in the hope of preventing the loss of my hair. Nothing saved my hair, however, and I resigned myself to the probability of lifelong baldness.

The engravings here printed are from actual photographs. The baldness was greater than apparent in the earlier picture as it extended over the back of my head.

In the course of my career, I had business with certain members of the Cherokee tribe of Indians and met a "medicine man" who gave me a pomade which I agreed to apply to my scalp.

To my surprise and joy, tiny hairs began to appear and gradually a growth of hair was developed all over my scalp. It was amazing to observe the improvement from week to week. A prolific hair growth resulted and has never left me, although many years have passed.

FREE TO YOU

The Cherokee wizard's secret or principle was imparted to me and I am willing to send the recipe free if you merely write, asking for it, enclosing stamp. Address John Hart Brittain, 150 East 32d St., BA-101, New York, N. Y. Some marvelous results have been reported. The pomade is called Kotalko. It is for men, women and children.

Kotalko is different from all the liquid lotions and hair tonics, washes, shampoos, etc. It is in a class by itself. It is to be applied with the finger tips where the hair is weak or where the scalp is bald.

So positive am I that Kotalko is absolutely unsurpassed for aiding in hair growth that I offer it under $300.00 cash guarantee. You may obtain a testing box of Kotalko compounded according to the original genuine Indian principle, by sending me 25 cents in silver or stamps to the above address.

$2.50 a Month

The masterpiece of watch manufacture—adjusted to the second, positions, temperature and isochronism. Encased at factory into your choice of the exquisite new watch cases.

21 Jewel Burlington

All sizes for both men and women

The great Burlington Watch sent on simple request. Pay at rate of $2.50 a month. You get the watch at the same price even the wholesale jeweler must pay.

Write Today for Free Watch Book

See handsome color illustrations of all the newest designs in watches that you have to choose from. Your name and address on a postcard is enough. Get this offer while it lasts. Write today.

Burlington Watch Co. Dept. 2794 19th & Marshall Blvd. Chicago

Eat Candy Reduce Weight

If you wish to reduce steadily, yet eat candy, ice cream, etc., get a small box of oil of korein at the druggist's. Follow the directions. Absolutely safe, guaranteed method of becoming thin. No self-starving; you become slender gracefully, vivacious, mentally and physically alert—glad you're alive! Reduce guaranteed 10 to 60 pounds.

HOW TO KNIT AND CROCHET WITH YARNS BOOK FREE

A new book on How to Knit and Crochet with Yarns; in fact, one of the most popular books of the hour is ready for our readers. This book is given FREE with one eighteen months' subscription to THE GENTLEWOMAN. It contains Outing Sweaters, Fancy Slip-Over Sweaters, Toques, Scarfs, Hats, Slippers, etc. Men's Knitted Gloves, Helmets, Sweaters, Babies' Jackets, Booties. Filled with splendid photographs and plain directions. Printed instructions are given with each piece so that you can follow the work either way.

Send us one eighteen months' subscription to THE GENTLEWOMAN, at 30 cents, in postage or silver, and we will send you our new Yarn Crochet Book. Address Crochet Book, THE GENTLEWOMAN, 615 West 43d Street, Dept. 278 New York.

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Special Offer — to prove our fine quality: These fine Pants for Dress or Business, choice of many handsome styles, guaranteed for 18 months solid wear and satisfaction or MONEY BACK, absolute $5.00 value—while they last, one pair to a customer. Express prepaid for only - - - **$1.95**

PANTS

No Extra Charges

No charge for big Extreme Peg Tops or Cuff Bottoms, nothing extra for fancy Belt Loops or Pocket Flaps, no charge for Open Welt Seams or Large sizes—all novelty features Free — no extra charges of any kind.

Cash Profits to you for taking measures of relatives and neighbors. Young George Gekevich made $66.16 in one day. Write for FREE samples today.

Chicago Tailors Association Dept. A-312 515 S. Franklin St., Chicago

Send No Money

TOBACCO HABIT CONQUERED IN 3 DAYS

I offer a genuine guaranteed remedy for tobacco or snuff habit. It is mild, pleasant, strengthening. For either sex. Overcome that peculiar nervousness and craving for cigarettes, cigars, pipe, chewing tobacco or snuff. Tobacco is poisonous and seriously injures the health in several ways, causing such disorders as nervous dyspepsia, sleeplessness, gas, belching, gnawing or other uncomfortable sensation in stomach; constipation, headache, weak eyes, loss of vigor, red spots on skin, throat irritation, catarrh, asthma, bronchitis, heart failure, lung trouble, melancholy, neurasthenia, impaired memory and willpower, impure (poisoned) blood, heartburn, torpid liver, loss of appetite, bad teeth, foul breath, lassitude, lack of ambition, weakening and falling out of hair and many other disorders. Nervous breakdown, weakened intellect and INSANITY are often attributed to tobacco habit by eminent medical men. Why continue to commit suicide when you can live a really contented life if you only get your body and nerves right? It is unsafe and torturing to attempt to rid yourself of habit by suddenly stopping with willpower—don't do it. Correct method is to eliminate the nicotine poison from system, strengthen the weakened, irritated membranes and nerves and genuinely overcome the craving. Would you like to quickly and easily quit tobacco and enjoy yourself a thousand times better while feeling always in robust health? My FREE book tells all about the wonderful 3 days Method. Inexpensive, reliable. Also Secret Method for conquering habit in another without his knowledge. Full particulars including my Book on Tobacco & Snuff Habit mailed in plain wrapper, free. Address:

FREE

EDWARD J. WOODS, WF 101, Station F, New York, N. Y.

Learn so Easily

K. I. SHORTHAND

New Book FREE

Learn in 5 Evenings

Then Acquire Speed Rapidly

Try This

Here's p and, this is o a Write the two together, and you have p a n d

Here's th To make path you simply write p and with these two easy movements of your pencil, you have made a word that needs 16 pencil movements when written in longhand.

Here's t so it is easy to write p a t, d a t and p a t.

Already you have learned four K.I. Shorthand signs you won't forget.

With the other signs and easy directions you can learn to indicate every word in the dictionary in quarter to twentieth of the time required in ordinary writing, as rapidly as words are spoken!

A girl soon learns to write by K. I. shorthand and may earn $10 to $35 weekly.

IF YOU can learn the lesson (at the right) within 5 minutes, you should learn the principles of K. I. SHORTHAND in 5 hours of spare time — after which acquire speed rapidly.

This is the perfected, QUICK, EASY METHOD If you wish to know how fast it is possible to write by K. I. Shorthand, ask somebody to read this whole advertisement rapidly within three minutes by your watch. Thus you'll realize the speed with which you should write after pleasant practice. SIMPLIFIED STENOGRAPHY.

Hindrances of old systems eliminated; no shading; no bother about positions on, over or under ruled lines—and you can read your own notes readily after months or years. Hence K. I. Shorthand is valuable for private notes, messages, etc.

K. I. Shorthand can be learned so quickly and easily that it is like a pastime. A SCORE OF DIFFERENT USES. Use it for taking dictation, telephone messages, notes, sermons, lectures, speeches, conferences, lessons, evidence. For making rapid notations while working problems, confidential diary or memoranda, etc. *Let K. I. Shorthand prepare you to walk with Opportunity through the Door to Success!*

FREE BOOK

We give you a complete correspondence course. One tenth the usual cost, ten times easier to learn. You'll be surprised and delighted with K. I. Shorthand. It is the scheme of SIMPLIFIED STENOGRAPHY.

Write for FREE BROCHURE with convincing testimonials to show that ours is a practical method with which you can make a SUCCESS. Do not miss this opportunity of a lifetime. To learn K. I. Shorthand will add to your efficiency and earning ability, also to the pleasure of your life. Write, or use coupon below, for free Brochure. Mention this newspaper. Address:

"Talk as fast as you like; I am taking it down in K. I. Shorthand"

KING INSTITUTE

154 East 32nd Street, New York, N. Y.

KING INSTITUTE. Send me your FREE BROCHURE.

Name .....

Address EC-101

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A Weekly Magazine Devoted to Photoplays and Players.

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